

Seniors not getting job out of fear of side effects: Study

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Concerns over the safety and efficacy of the vaccines is the main reason seniors are reluctant to go for Covid-19 jabs.

This was one of the lessons drawn from a study conducted by Singapore Management University's Centre for Research on Successful Ageing.

The study used data collected from the Singapore Life Panel, a population representative monthly survey of Singaporeans aged between 56 and 75.

In last month's survey of 7,288 respondents, the most common reason given by those not wanting to get vaccinated is that they are worried about the negative side effects from the vaccines.

The second most cited reason is that they do not believe in any form of vaccination.

Among those who were adopting a wait-and-see approach, the two most cited reasons are: They are waiting to find out whether there are reports of negative side effects from the vaccines and that they are waiting until a majority of Singaporeans in their age group are vaccinated.

"These findings suggest that many older adults remain sceptical of the efficacy and safety of the vaccines," the study said.

"Thus, to encourage more older adults to get vaccinated, the authorities should make efforts to assure older adults of the safety of the vaccines."

The study also concluded that those who were most likely to be waiting to be vaccinated or did not want to get the jab as of last month, are relatively older - aged between 71 and 75.

They are of lower socioeconomic status, with lower education levels and living in one-, two- or three-room Housing Board flats. They are also likely to have one or more chronic health conditions.

The study recommends that government initiatives should focus on assuring individuals that the vaccines are effective and do not pose a significant risk, particularly for those who may be of poorer health but are still able to be vaccinated.

As those who are reluctant are likely to hold less trust in official or formal sources of information, these initiatives should reach out to younger relatives deemed more trustworthy.