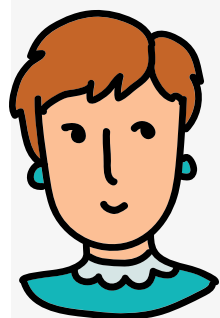


COVID-19 is a Health Equity Issue: Digital Redlining, The Digital Divide & Vaccine Distribution

AGE

Only 50% of people who are 75+ use the Internet; 16.5 % of those 65+ do not have access to the Internet



The statistics are worse for older people of color, as **25%** of **Black**, **21%** of **Latinx**, and **28%** of **Native American** people 65+ do not have internet access. Approximately **7.7 million** older people live at or below the **poverty line**, and may not be able to afford internet access.

RACE

Digital redlining follows the same geographical lines as neighborhood and housing redlining.



82% of **white** people report owning a **desktop or laptop computer**, compared with **58%** of **Black** and **57%** of **Hispanic** people. The lack of internet access in minority communities is one of the reasons that the **vaccination rate** for **Black** Americans is **50%** less than that of **white** people, and the gap for Hispanic people is even larger.

GEOGRAPHY

Both rural and urban areas are less likely to have access to the internet and technological devices than suburban areas.



27.9 million urban households or **10.8%** of the urban population live without a broadband internet subscription. **Rural Americans** are **12%** less likely than **Americans overall** to have **home broadband**, with only **63%** having **home access**.

Socioeconomic Status

Even in regions with well connected internet access, differences arise for each household depending socioeconomic status.



Nearly **50%** of households earning less than **\$30,000 per year** reported that they **do not have a computer or broadband in their home**. Those without home computers use a smartphone or public computer lab when they want to utilize online services, with significant connection issues.

Short Term Recommendations

These recommendations aim to alleviate the immediate roadblocks to COVID-19 vaccine distribution

- Create accessible and multiple ways to register for the vaccine that do not rely solely on technology.
- Support and encourage both private and public sector initiatives to expand access to broadband and devices.
- Start and implement community-based immunization programs.

Long Term Systemic Changes

These recommendations look at the larger issues surrounding the digital divide and digital redlining

- Improve quality and speed of internet access.
- Invest in infrastructure to facilitate the expansion of broadband services.
- Work with communities to increase health, digital, and media literacy and to integrate online based programs with community based programs.



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