

# Vermont Immigrant Health Insurance Plan: Outreach and Education

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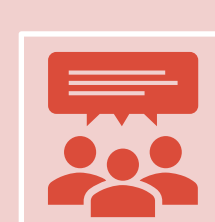
## BACKGROUND

- Vermont has four programs that offer free or low-cost healthcare services to non-U.S. citizens: Dr. Dynasaur, the Immigrant Health Insurance Plan (IHIP), Emergency Medicaid, and health plans available through Vermont Health Connect (VHC).
- On July 1, 2022, the Vermont legislature enacted IHIP. This state-based program was established to expand health insurance coverage for pregnant individuals and children under the age of 19 who do not qualify for Vermont's Medicaid program due to their immigration status.
- By addressing this gap in coverage, IHIP aims to improve health outcomes for immigrant families and ensure that no child or pregnant person is left without essential healthcare.
- Vermont's Medicaid program, the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) has "Assisters" who are trained to provide enrollment assistance and education to individuals and families.
- Despite the program's potential to significantly improve health outcomes for immigrant families, challenges persist in reaching all eligible individuals and ensuring they are fully informed about the benefits and services available through IHIP.

## GOAL

- To identify barriers to IHIP enrollment and understand knowledge gaps within the target population and the healthcare community.

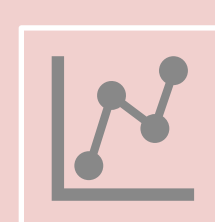
## METHODS



Electronic survey with open- and closed-ended questions distributed statewide to primary care providers, social workers, community partners, and the DVHA Assisters.



Interviewed community stakeholders, a Legislator, hospital Financial Services staff, DVHA staff and leaders, and the Office of the Health Care Advocate at Vermont Legal Aid.



Survey data summarized using Stata; key themes from the open-ended questions were categorized through consensus.

## RESULTS

Respondent roles (N=125)

Role	N	%
Medical	71	57%
Community org	8	6%
CHW	9	7%
Financial Services	14	11%
Social Work	8	6%
Mental Health	3	2%
Other	14	11%

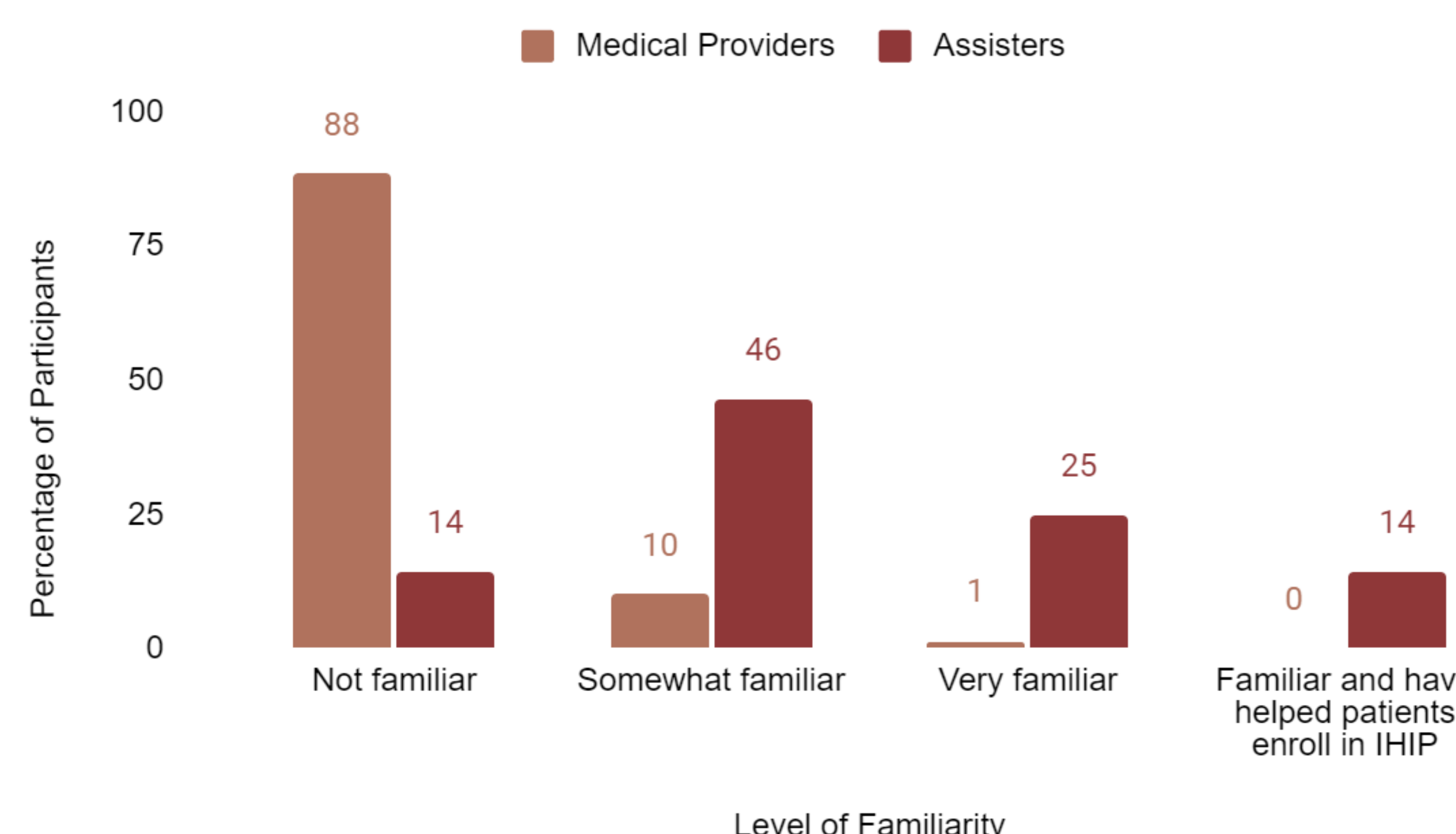
  

Medical	N	%
FM	35	49%
IM	14	20%
Ob/Gyn	8	11%
Peds	7	1%
Other	7	1%

Qualitative themes

Theme	Shared by	Quote
Need for focused educational sessions	Financial Services, CHW, SW, Medical Providers, Community Orgs	<i>It would be nice just to have someone come and talk about IHIP at a peer led learning/staff meeting.</i>
Use of simple and clear educational materials	Financial Services, Medical Providers, Community Orgs	<i>Need a brochure letting me know what it covers.</i>
Enhanced communication strategies for IHIP eligible individuals	Financial Services, DVHA (Medicaid) Assisters	<i>Making sure communications/flyers are available in appropriate translation and located in areas where migrant workers or immigrants are living/working.</i>
Institutional or systemic changes	Medical Providers, CHWs	<i>Ensure all primary care practices are aware and have a trained assister.</i>
Address barriers to enrollment	Medical Providers, Office of the Health Care Advocate	<i>People are hesitant to [provide verification documents to] prove their residency.</i>

Familiarity with the Immigrant Health Insurance Plan



## DISCUSSION

- 65% of survey respondents reported being unfamiliar with IHIP compared to 88% for medical providers.
- Only 5% of all respondents believed there was adequate knowledge of IHIP among the eligible population.
- There is a pressing need for increased awareness and education of IHIP among healthcare professionals that work directly with the immigrant population.

### Enhance Awareness and Education:

- Respondents suggested creating simple targeted educational materials, infographics, and outreach about IHIP to improve provider awareness and understanding.
- These initiatives could begin to address the gap in familiarity among healthcare providers.

### Facilitate Provider-Assister Collaboration:

- Familiarity and communication between medical providers and DVHA Assisters would help connect patients to the resources and assistance they need for IHIP enrollment.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

### Engage with IHIP Enrolees:

- Interview current and prospective IHIP enrolees to understand their perspectives.

### Collaborate with Community Partners:

- Partner with advocacy groups and community organizations to identify strategies to simplify the enrolment process.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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