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Voices and Stories of Older Adults' Lived Experiences Session

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**Voices and Stories of Older Adults' Lived
Experiences Session**
Pandemic Stories: Voices of Older Adults

**Please click on the Zoom link below in the description
to access this session**

Pandemic Stories: Voices of older adults

Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference, 22 October, 2021
Presented by: Leigh Hayden

Team:

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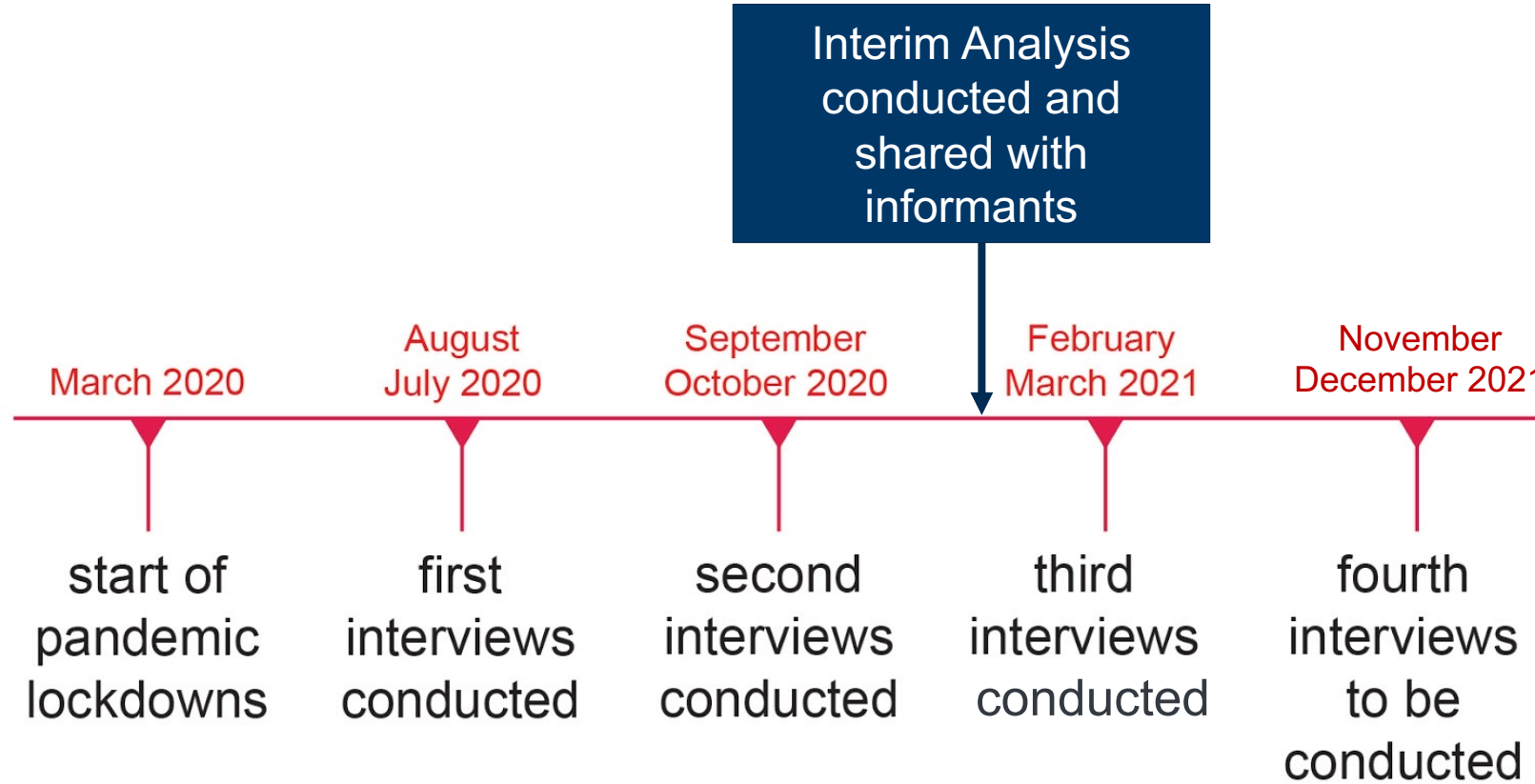


Background

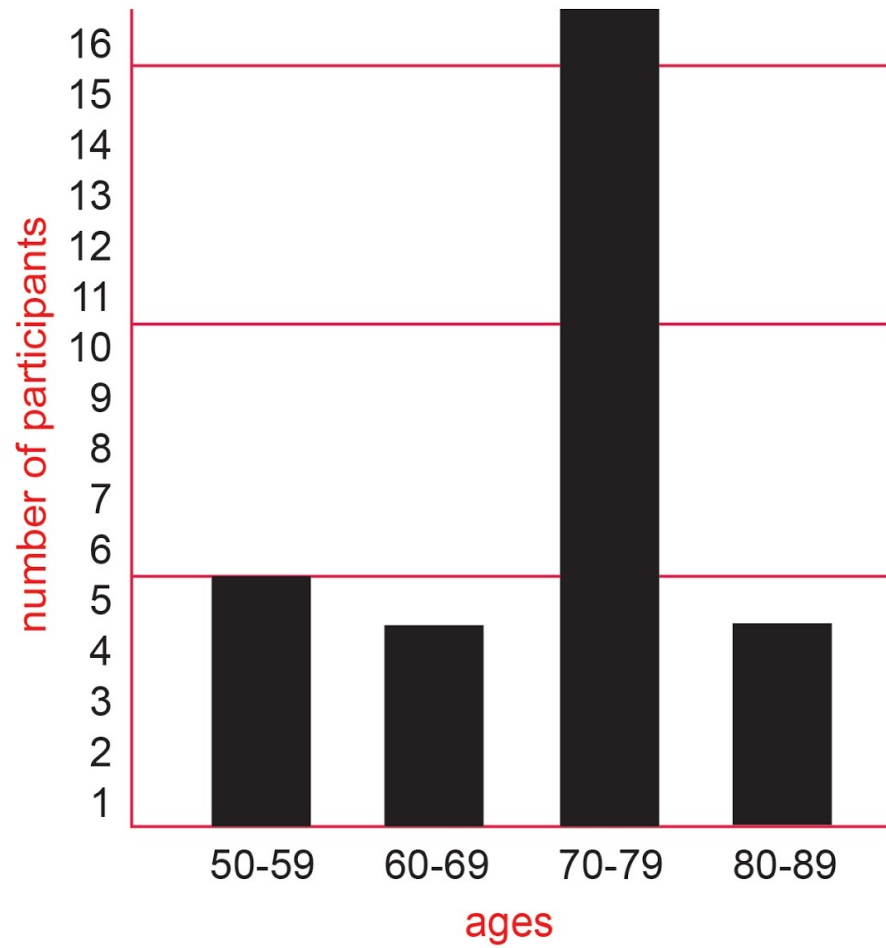
Widespread societal concern for older adults when the pandemic began.

Awareness of the importance that their voices be heard and recorded.

Methods

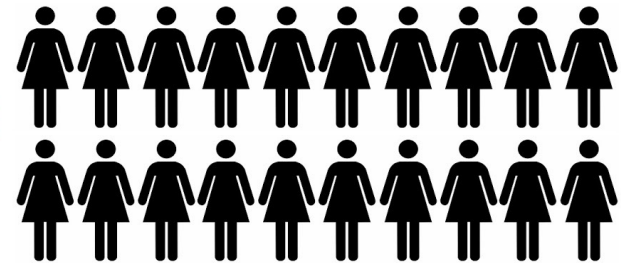


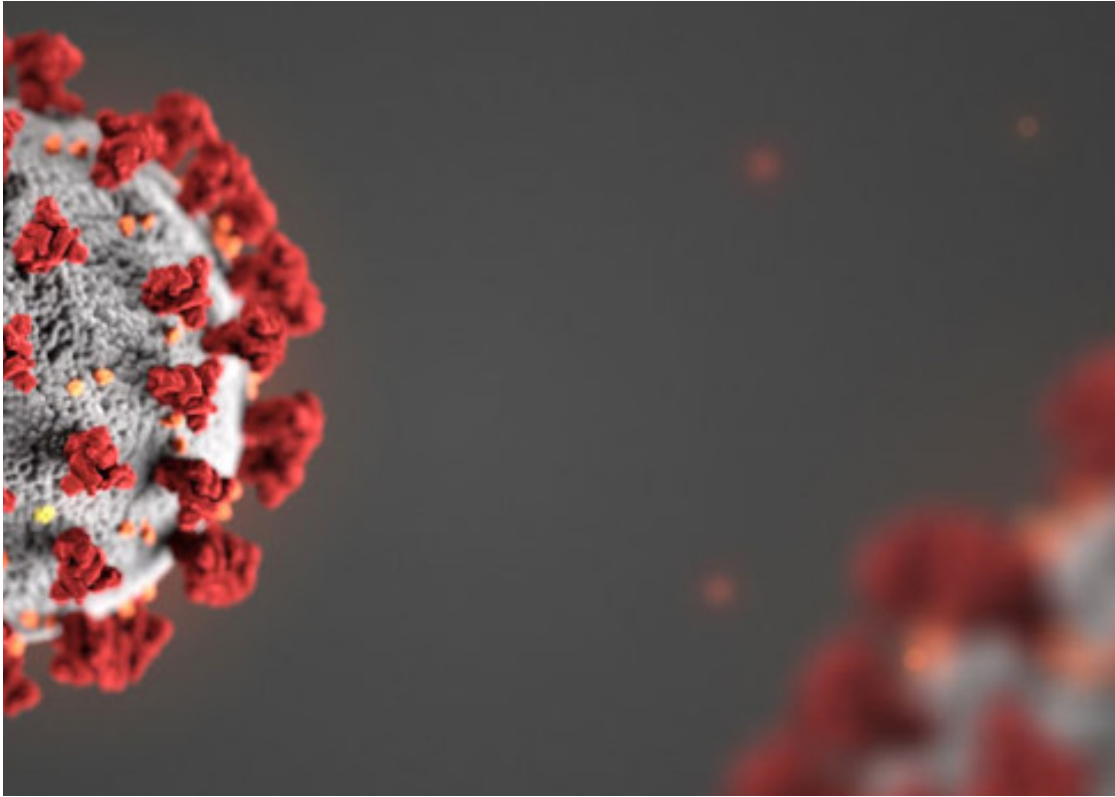
Recruitment



25

participants





Illness as a metaphor.

Origin of COVID-19

Those who spoke in detail about the virus's origin said that it was a bat coronavirus that spread to humans because bat habitat was being encroached on – and blamed this global phenomenon of animal habitat destruction on the spread of the virus from bats to humans. So, the story is about how our behaviour impacts the environment.

Spread of COVID-19

One of the major risk factors that scientists and the media have focused on for COVID-19 is age, with older persons being at “higher risk” for illness and death. Some of our informants resented being seen as “vulnerable” to COVID-19 due to their age and resented the virus’s apparent “targeting” of older adults.

What COVID-19 has revealed

One major recurrent theme was the revelatory nature of the pandemic. The global lockdowns have resulted in what one informant called “hitting that pause button”, and this pause has allowed us to see more clearly inequalities and injustices.

Public health measures



Our informants spoke about the importance of following public health measures which needed to be followed in order to control the spread of the virus.

Conclusion



Examining metaphors used to describe both the coronavirus and the pandemic can help us more deeply understand meaning-making and embodied experiences of older persons.

Thank you

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