

How Community Health Care Workers Can Maximize Covid-19 Vaccination Outreach Efforts

Created by Health Outreach Partners

This tip sheet outlines best practices of COVID-19 vaccination outreach for community health workers (CHWs) and clinicians. Nationwide, CHWs and clinicians are making a difference in their communities' ongoing COVID-19 response. This information is meant to support those efforts as we continue to respond to the changing environment of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Talking about vaccines is hard!

Approach each conversation with compassion and an open mind. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, so too will our approach to vaccine outreach. The following tips and strategies can be useful for a variety of audiences, and are not dependent on a specific phase of response. efforts.

Strategy for Starting Vaccine Dialogue

When approaching a patient who may be vaccine hesitant it is important to acknowledge their concerns, while building trust and a rapport. A strategy that frames this approach is the CASE Framework:

C **Corroborate** – find common ground, acknowledge concerns

A **About me** – what you have done to build your knowledge, what makes you trustworthy

S **Science** – describe what the science says

E **Explain/ Advise** – give your recommendation



Source [Minnesota Medicine \(2021\) - Applying the CASE approach to COVID-19 mRNA vaccine hesitancy](#).

Consider..

- Asking open-ended questions at first
- Finding their “why” and move the conversation away from “why not”
- Sharing emotional and personal stories about making the decision to get vaccinated
- Asking for permission to share more information or advice

Avoid..

- Scientific jargon
- Making assumptions
- Overpromising the impact of the vaccines on eliminating COVID-19
- Using negativity, fear or guilt
- Appealing to morality
- Promising going “back to normal”

Misinformation & Vaccine Hesitancy

Myths and misinformation about the COVID-19 have become widespread and have influenced hesitancy towards vaccination efforts. Regardless of someone's approach to COVID-19 vaccines, everyone is susceptible to misinformation depending on their biases or preconceptions.



8/10

Adults reported hearing at least one of eight different pieces of misinformation:

Either believe them to be true or are not sure whether they are true or false.



Source: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (October 14-24, 2021)

Strategies for Addressing Misinformation and Vaccine Hesitancy:

Motivational Interviewing

A patient-centered approach that focuses on building understanding to encourage healthy habits. This process includes:

1. **Asking** open-ended questions
2. **Reflective** listening
3. **Eliciting** pros and cons of change
4. **Inquiring** about the importance and confidence of making a change
5. **Summarizing** the conversation

When addressing misinformation and myths, it is important to:

- Correct misinformation when you can
- Identify and address most urgent, common piece of misinformation.
- Avoid repeating misinformation
- Use clear and accessible messaging
- Be creative on how to spread facts and accurate information
- Don't change the facts.
- Challenge the story behind the facts.
- **Focus on the proven risks of not being vaccinated and repeat the truth!**

Source: [Pan American Health Organization \(2021\) - Communicating about Vaccine Safety](#)



Connecting with Your Community

Feature community voices. Clinicians and CHWs know their communities best. Community-centered outreach approaches will make the biggest impact, as every community is different and unique.

Community-Centered Outreach Strategies

- **Provide** opportunities to talk to a healthcare provider at community events or locations like county fairs, pharmacies, or through telehealth visits.
- **Collaborate** with organizations serving traditionally marginalized populations.
- **Approach** connections relevant to caregivers, such as: health fairs, family-focused events, or collaborating with school districts or youth serving organizations to distribute information or resources.

Elevating Trusted Voices

Identify who the trusted messengers are in your community and elevate their voices as vaccine champions. Trusted community voices may have some of the following characteristics:

- Well equipped with factual information and resources
- Linguistically and culturally competent
- Are present in the community during vaccine outreach events
- Are present on social media, ads, radio, other types of media

As of March, 2022 over 215 million people have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

This is an astonishing feat, and credit is mainly due to the dedication of our nation's CHWs and clinicians. While outreach efforts are ongoing, it is important that our CHWs feel supported during this time. **Not all outreach efforts will provide the desired results, and it is important to keep the following in mind:**

1. **Let the patient know** you will offer vaccination resources again. Many parents who decline at first will vaccinate later!
2. **Offer** COVID-19 related reading material
3. **Do not** over-remember any negative interactions
4. **Relax.** Remind yourself and your colleagues that everyone is doing their best for all patients.

Source: [Dr. Kristin Oliver, MD, MHS Mount Sinai \(2021\) - Techniques and Talking Points to Address Vaccine Hesitancy](#)