



Strategies for Improving Staff and Resident Confidence in the COVID-19 Vaccine

December 1, 2020

Below is a list of ideas to help overcome hesitancy to get the new COVID-19 vaccine by your staff and residents. You can choose which strategies best fit the needs of your community:

- Use the “Questions & Answers about the COVID-19 Vaccine” document as a guide for town hall sessions with staff, residents and family members to teach them about the development of vaccines, clinical trials, and safety protocols. Allow time to take questions from attendees. Ideally, try to hold these educational sessions regularly, such as every week or every few weeks as new questions/concerns arise.
- Create posters/flyers that you can hang and distribute in your facilities about the importance and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine. Consider having a poster contest with staff and/or residents, with the person who creates the best poster about the COVID-19 vaccine winning a prize. Everyone can vote.
- Strategies to reduce vaccine hesitancy in **staff**:
 - Hold regular team meetings/group huddles to allow for education about safety and benefits of vaccine, addressing specific questions from staff. These questions can help you determine what the greatest concerns are among staff.
 - Build a stakeholder team with representatives from every part of the facility: housekeeping; dining; nursing assistants, nurses, social workers, Director of Nursing, Medical Director, Administrator. Identify "peer" champions that can help educate and encourage peers to get vaccinated. Hold small huddles with peer groups led by the champion for that group.
 - Encourage role modeling by medical directors, administrators, DON--e.g. post videos of them getting the vaccine on your facility's web page, intranet or on social media; have members of your leadership team get vaccinated during an all-staff meeting.
 - Create a celebratory atmosphere around getting the vaccine—hold the vaccine clinics outside if possible, with music, snacks and other giveaways.
 - Hand out stickers/buttons that say "I got the COVID-19 Vaccine"
 - Ask staff to post pictures of themselves getting the vaccine with the caption, "I'm getting vaccinated for..." (similar to the "I mask for [my mom, grandmother, kids, etc.]" campaign around mask-wearing)
 - Hold contests between facilities (which facility in the organization has the highest % of vaccinated staff)
 - Create a bulletin board with updated information about the vaccines
 - Be attentive to cultural differences within your staff that can have an impact on their attitudes and beliefs about vaccines. This article may be helpful:
<https://www.historyofvaccines.org/content/articles/cultural-perspectives-vaccination>

- Strategies to reduce vaccine hesitancy in **residents/family members**:
 - Hold town halls to educate and allow for questions.
 - Discuss history of vaccines and how they have benefited society for decades (flu, polio, MMR, etc.); appeal to this generation and their sense of doing their part.
 - Put a “Q & A on the COVID-19 Vaccine” section in your newsletter or regularly sent emails to residents and family members (you can include the Q & A document created by AMDA)
 - Create a video clip of your CMO and/or DON talking about the vaccine, its safety and benefits. For example, explain that the more people who get vaccinated, the easier it will be to allow visitors into the facility.