



COVID-19 Vaccination Conversation Tips for Homeless Service Providers

When talking with persons experiencing homelessness and staff about getting the COVID-19 vaccine, remember to approach all discussions from a place of empathy and understanding. To your best ability understand what vaccination phase includes people experiencing homelessness and shelter staff by reviewing your state's vaccine distribution plan and explain how that impacts the timing of vaccine availability.

Start from a Place of Empathy

- Emotions are high as we navigate the realities of protecting our nation from continued COVID-19 outbreaks.
- Acknowledge the stressful nature of the pandemic.
- Acknowledge the history of distrust with the medical establishment by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

Provide Truthful Education and Information

- Discuss how widespread vaccination will end the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Currently, two COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna) have been authorized for emergency use under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
 - COVID-19 vaccines seem to have appeared quickly in terms of finding a vaccine, and that is good news.
 - These vaccines have gone through rigorous clinical trials at an accelerated scale to ensure they meet safety standards.
 - The vaccine development process included participation of BIPOC medical professionals and clinical trial participants.
 - Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna have been authorized for distribution in the United States and no major safety concerns have been reported.
 - There can be minor side effects such as headache, fever, muscle aches and fatigue that should resolve a day or two after vaccination.
- There are limits to the amount of vaccine being manufactured, so the vaccine is not yet available for everyone. In the meantime, it is important that everyone continue to follow public health guidelines such as the proper use of masks, social distancing, and frequent hand washing to avoid illness before and after vaccination.
- Program leaders are a trusted resource for people who may be confused or unsure about COVID-19 vaccination. Being a caring and empathetic source of information is crucial to vaccine education and protecting the health of your clients and team.

Listen Attentively

- Encourage questions to maintain credibility. Reassure your audience that you want to help answer their questions so they can feel confident about getting vaccinated. If you do not know the answer to their question, assure them that you will get them the information and tell them when to expect it from you.
- Offer to schedule an appointment for the person with whom you are engaging if they are interested.