

Guidance to Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence

Patients trust healthcare staff for COVID-19 vaccine information, so it is important to be knowledgeable and have effective vaccine conversations with your patients. Key strategies when talking with your patients about COVID-19 vaccines include the following:

- **Build trust** by asking for permission to share information about the vaccine with them.
- **Stay positive** throughout the conversation and give them the choice to get vaccinated.
- **Acknowledge and listen** to patient concerns about why they may not want the vaccine, and address concerns by reinforcing safety benefits.
- **Be proactive** about explaining the vaccine side effects.
- **Give a strong recommendation**, such as “This vaccine is especially important for you because you are on dialysis and at an increased risk to get sick from COVID-19.”
- **Emphasize** that vaccination is the most safe and effective way to protect oneself, loved ones, and those most vulnerable.
- **Remind** patients that vaccination will allow them to safely visit with other friends and family that have been vaccinated.



Resource Links to Promote COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence

- [**Communications and Confidence Readiness Checklist**](#)—Use this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) checklist to assess the COVID-19 communication readiness in your facility. Tailor the checklist to the needs of your facility with the resource links provided in the checklist.
- [**Vaccinate with Confidence: Strategy to Reinforce Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines**](#)—Use this CDC website to refer to resources that address building confidence in COVID-19 vaccines that can be used in your facility.
- [**What Clinicians Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccine Safety and Effectiveness and How to Address Patient Questions and Concerns**](#)—Use this CDC presentation to provide staff training and education regarding ways to effectively communicate with patients about COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 Script to Increase Vaccine Confidence

Here are sample scripts to use with medically eligible patients to increase COVID-19 vaccine confidence. In addition to using these scripts, share positive stories and/or your personal experience with COVID-19 vaccination to help alleviate fears and hesitation about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

Staff	Have you received the COVID-19 vaccine? Are you interested in receiving the vaccine?
Patient	I don't want to get sick. I have gotten sick from the flu shot in the past.
Staff	The COVID-19 vaccine may cause some mild side effects like a sore arm, headache, body aches, and fever for 1–2 days, but you can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine. More importantly, COVID-19 can have serious and life-threatening complications.
Patient	I want to wait to see how other people do after vaccination. How do I know it's safe?
Staff	The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reviewed the known and potential benefits and risks of the COVID-19 vaccine. In studies that included tens of thousands of people, the vaccines have been shown to be highly effective in preventing COVID-19 illness. These vaccines are more effective than flu shots. The patients in these COVID-19 vaccine studies were carefully monitored for over two months to learn about the safety of the vaccines.
Patient	I don't do shots; vaccines don't work, and I don't think they are safe.
Staff	Vaccines work with your immune system to protect you from disease. The COVID-19 vaccines currently available have been shown to be a highly effective and safe way of preventing COVID-19, and/or becoming seriously ill from the COVID-19 virus. The COVID-19 vaccine has benefits that outweigh the risks.
Patient	I do not need the COVID-19 vaccine. I don't get sick.
Staff	Dialysis patients are more likely to get sicker with COVID-19 than those not on dialysis. Some people can be infected with COVID-19 but not know it and infect others. Getting the vaccine may help protect the people around you from getting it. Even healthy people can get sick or end up in the hospital from this virus.
Patient	It's too late. I have already been sick with COVID.
Staff	It is recommended to get vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19 because it is unknown how long you are protected from getting sick again, after recovering from COVID. If you have been sick with COVID-19, it is possible to get reinfected.

****The patient should be fully recovered prior to administering any vaccination.***

Please remind patients and staff that it is still important to wear a mask, keep physically distant from others, and frequently wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after they are vaccinated to help stop the pandemic.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Pfizer-BioNTech.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Moderna.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/safety-of-vaccines.html>



ESRD Networks 7, 13, 15, 17

This material was prepared by HSAG: ESRD Networks 7, 13, 15, and 17, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy nor imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. NW-ESRD-XN-03262021-01.