How to Build Healthcare Personnel's Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines

Your healthcare personnel were placed first in line to receive the COVID-19 vaccines because of their essential role in fighting this deadly pandemic and their increased risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to their patients. Their decision to get vaccinated can protect more than just their health. It can also help protect their colleagues, patients, families, and communities.

What Is Vaccine Confidence?

Vaccine confidence is the trust that patients, their families, and providers have in:

- Recommended vaccines
- Providers who administer vaccines
- Processes and policies that lead to vaccine development, licensure or authorization, manufacturing, and recommendations for use

Many factors influence vaccine decision-making, including contextual factors (e.g. cultural, social, political), individual and group factors, and vaccine-specific factors. However, confidence in the vaccines, the vaccinator, and the system all support the decision to get vaccinated.

Why is it important?

Being first in line to be vaccinated makes some healthcare personnel hesitant to get the vaccine. Before they agree to be vaccinated, they will want answers to their questions about the expedited process for developing these vaccines and information about the vaccines' safety and effectiveness.

By answering their questions and taking time to listen to their concerns, you can help healthcare personnel be informed and confident when they decide to get vaccinated. When they decide to get vaccinated, healthcare personnel can have a powerful influence on their families and communities. And communities with strong confidence in the vaccines lead to more people getting vaccinated, which leads to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Six steps to building confidence in your facility

Healthcare personnel need to feel confident in their decision to get vaccinated. One way to build that confidence is by making vaccine confidence visible in your facility. Here's how:

1. Encourage senior leaders to be vaccine champions.

Identify trusted leaders from various areas of the facility to serve as vaccine champions. These leaders should look like the healthcare personnel in your workforce. Ask them to lead by example by getting a COVID-19 vaccine and being photographed while doing so.

Invite leaders to share with staff their personal reasons for getting vaccinated and the importance of vaccination. You can share their stories and photos using:

- Testimonials given during elevator conversations, meetings, and staff presentations
- Short videos
- Email blasts
- Social media
- Blogs or web articles

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

2. Host discussions where personnel at different levels can provide input and ask questions.

If all healthcare personnel in a facility—from food services to nurses to the chief medical officer—get vaccinated and use all current protective measures against spreading the virus that causes COVID-19, it will help ensure that healthcare personnel, patients, and families are protected. An important step to achieving this robust level of protection is holding discussions across job areas in your facility about how to promote confidence in and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines. These open discussions can help you address staff questions and concerns and get their input on how to best build vaccine confidence within your facility and ensure the success of the steps described below.

CDC resources:
- Use **Appendix A. COVID-19 Vaccine Communication and Confidence Checklist** to plan multiple ways to communicate with staff to promote COVID-19 vaccine confidence.
- Use **Appendix B Vaccine Confidence Conversation Starter Guide** to create ideas about how to structure these discussions to promote vaccine confidence within your organization. Ideas generated during these discussions can help you tailor approaches that will work best in your facility to build staff buy-in and vaccine confidence.

3. Share key messages with staff through emails, breakroom posters, and other channels.

Use a variety of communication channels such as meeting announcements, posters in common spaces breakrooms, bathrooms, hallways), email blasts, your health system intranet, and social media to share key messages with staff about the importance of vaccination and vaccine confidence. Messages should include:
- Get the COVID-19 vaccine to protect yourself, your patients, your colleagues, and your family from infection.
- Vaccine confidence starts with you! Building defenses against COVID-19 is a team effort in our facility.
- Getting a COVID-19 vaccine adds one more layer of protection against infection for you, your coworkers, your patients, and your families.
- You can do several things to build vaccine confidence:
  - Choose to get vaccinated yourself.
  - Share your reasons for getting vaccinated and encourage others to get vaccinated.
  - Learn how to have effective COVID-19 vaccine conversations with others to encourage them to get vaccinated.

4. Educate healthcare teams about COVID-19 vaccines, how they are developed and monitored for safety, and how teams can talk to others about the vaccines.

Remind your staff of the important role they play in their communities by sharing vaccine information and building confidence in the vaccines. Teach them how to have effective COVID-19 vaccine conversations and answer common questions—with their families, friends, and communities.

CDC resources:
- COVID-19 Vaccine Basics: What Healthcare Personnel Need to Know (*PowerPoint*)
- COVID-19 Vaccine Training: General Overview of Immunization Best Practices for Healthcare Professionals (*PowerPoint*)
- Building Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines Among Your Patients: Tips for the Healthcare Team (*PowerPoint*)
- Quick Answers to Common Questions People Might Ask about COVID-19 Vaccines: Tips for Healthcare Professionals (*Fact Sheet*)

5. Educate non-medical staff about the importance of getting vaccinated.

Educate non-medical staff about COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccine development and safety monitoring processes. Emphasize the benefits of protecting themselves, their families, coworkers, patients, and communities.

CDC resources:
- COVID-19 Vaccine Basics: What Healthcare Personnel Need to Know (*PowerPoint*)
- Fact sheets in multiple languages accommodating a range of literacy levels (*Coming soon*)

Create a feedback mechanism for staff to get answers to their questions. Let them know they also have an important role in making vaccine confidence visible in your facility.
- Offer patients a dedicated phone line to call with questions about vaccination.
  · In large health systems, consider a dedicated line for healthcare personnel as well.
- Solicit and update FAQs regularly on the staff intranet and public website.
- Host live question-and-answer sessions with vaccine experts and local staff members using:
  · Brown bag sessions for staff
  · Public-facing social media livestreams
  · Outreach sessions for community and faith-based groups

6. Make the decision to get vaccinated visible, and celebrate it!

- Provide "I got my COVID-19 vaccine!" pins, lanyards, masks, bracelets, etc.
- With permission, post a photo gallery in common or break areas of the health facility or online as part of a social media campaign showing cheerful staff who were just vaccinated.
- Offer a small, sincere token of gratitude for early adopters (such as a personalized thank you note from the chief medical officer, an ice cream treat, or a profile in your staff newsletter).
- With permission, record testimonials on why healthcare personnel in your facility decided to get vaccinated and share with the media.
- Get creative with producing and sharing inclusive, positive behind-the-scenes moments showing staff caring for patients (for example, record healthcare personnel's reactions to the moment their first patient is protected against COVID-19).
- Reach out to local news outlets to highlight your health facility's leadership in COVID-19 vaccine introduction.