

Strategies for Combating Vaccine Hesitancy in Primary Care

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Introduction

- Vaccine hesitancy is a growing concern, leading to outbreaks of preventable diseases.¹
- Primary care providers play a key role in improving vaccine acceptance.⁴
- This poster explores effective communication strategies to address hesitancy.

Background

Why Vaccine Hesitancy is a Problem?

- Creates gaps in herd immunity, leaving populations vulnerable.^{1,2}
- Vaccine hesitancy differs from vaccine refusal; effective communication can address hesitancy.
- Several patients mentioned feeling ignored by healthcare providers when discussing vaccination concerns.⁵

Challenges of Vaccine Hesitancy

- Misinformation spreads faster than accurate information²
- Patients may feel isolated after raising concerns due to shaming from the medical community⁵
- Diverse factors contribute to hesitancy: social, cultural, religious, and personal history⁷⁻¹¹
- Celebrities help to spread misinformation¹⁰

Strategies

- Employ effective communication strategies.⁶⁻¹⁸
- Exposing patients to vaccine-preventable disease survivors (when appropriate).²⁰
- Utilizing educational tools and resources.⁶⁻²⁰
- Addressing social and cultural factors influencing hesitancy.⁶

Predicted Outcomes

- Reduced risk of outbreaks and preventable diseases.²⁰
- Stronger community health outcomes.⁶
- Increased trust in healthcare providers.⁶⁻²⁰

Methodology

Both PubMed and Google Scholar were utilized to search for “Vaccine Hesitancy”, “History AND Vaccine Hesitancy”, “Combating Vaccine Hesitancy” and “providers AND vaccine hesitancy”. Articles were then narrowed by limiting the search to the last 10 years, with the exception of those providing historical context.

Effective Communication

- **Motivational interviewing (MI):** Builds trust, explores concerns, and empowers patients.⁶⁻¹⁸
- **Presumptive language:** Frame vaccines as routine part of care (e.g., "We'll be giving you a flu shot today").⁶
- **Tailored communication:** Address specific concerns and misinformation.⁶⁻²¹
- **Empathy and active listening:** Understand patients' perspectives and validate their concerns.⁶⁻²¹
- **Education:** Provide accurate, clear information about vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases.⁶⁻²¹

Conclusions

- Primary care providers can significantly improve vaccine acceptance through effective communication strategies.⁶⁻²⁰
- The most effective communication strategy is motivational interviewing.⁶⁻²¹
- By building trust, addressing concerns, and providing accurate information, we can create a healthier future for all.

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