

May 17, 2021

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Dear provider of pharmaceutical services,

Vaccines are considered one of the most effective measures to prevent diseases and have been an important part of public health for many years. There are vaccines for various diseases such as flu, whooping cough, chickenpox, diphtheria, and human papilloma virus, which have been available for years. Recently the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine has been approved and nowadays, there are three manufacturing companies producing this vaccine on a large scale trying to get as many people vaccinated to achieve herd immunity as soon as possible. With the addition of the COVID-19 vaccine to immunization options, misinformation in people has increased, affecting the process of trying to stop the current pandemic. Also, the administration of vaccines for other diseases has been affected.

Related to the COVID-19 vaccine, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that about 117.6 million people had been fully vaccinated in the United States. However, there is a large part of the population that has not been vaccinated for COVID-19, nor do they have their other vaccinations up to date. It is thought that only about 25% of adults are up to date on routinely recommended adult vaccines. Some surveys have demonstrated that many patients know that vaccines are important, but most of them are not aware of all the vaccines that they may need. Also, this lack of immunization among adults can occur for different reasons in which healthcare professionals have a role and responsibility.

The following table summarizes the three main reasons by which patients are hesitant or unsure about vaccines and possible interventions.

Main Reasons	Possible Intervention
Lack of confidence in effectiveness, safety, policy makers, or the system.	Educate about the importance of vaccination and the fact that vaccines have been effective and safe for many years preventing diseases and deaths.
Perceived low risk of acquiring vaccine preventable diseases.	Educate on the high potential for infection, complications, and even mortality that the patient may face with different diseases for which there is a vaccine available.
Lack of convenience in the availability, accessibility, and appeal of immunization services.	Pharmacists and pharmacies can be certified as immunizer and immunization centers, respectively, to provide patients with greater accessibility to these protection measures.

How can we increase the number of patients who want to be vaccinated and reinforce actual immunization efforts?

- Appropriate patient education is the most important component. Answer questions and clarify misconceptions about vaccines is necessary.
- Assess the immunization needs of your patients at every pharmacy encounter, if possible. Promote vaccines according to age and patient's clinical profile.
- Administer the vaccines you have or refer the patient to a provider that has them. Try to get the patient the vaccine they need.
- Document vaccinations on respective immunization information system. This information will help statistics efforts and keep the patient's profile up to date.

Pharmacists must act as advocates, educators, and immunizers and actions taken now will have a huge impact on what is going to happen to immunization efforts today and in the future. It is necessary to make strategies and movements where vaccination is promoted effectively, and misinformation completely rejected.

Additional information about strategies for increasing vaccination rates can be found at the [CDC's website - Strategies for Increasing Adult Vaccination Rates](#).

PharmPix is committed to the health and wellness of our members. It is our priority to offer high-quality services and support practices for health promotion and diseases prevention. If you have any questions or wish to have more information regarding this document, you can call us at 787-522-5252, extension 137. In addition, know that you can access our recent communications at our providers' portal: <https://www.pharmpix.com/providers/>.

Regards,

PharmPix Clinical Department

References:

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