

# TALKING ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE WITH PATIENTS

SCRIPT FOR FRONTLINE STAFF

The first step to getting patients to consider getting the COVID-19 vaccine is to talk with them and listen to their concerns. Below is a short script to do that. It is intended to be a guide, so after you get comfortable, feel free to create your own approach based on it. After the conversation, you can offer to help patients make an appointment or get more information, but let them make up their own minds. Did you have a respectful conversation? Mission accomplished!

## BODY LANGUAGE TIPS

Keep your body and face relaxed. If you feel tense, they will feel tense.

Even if you are busy, try to slow down to give the person your full attention. Make eye contact (if culturally appropriate). Don't finish their sentences, and don't look at your phone.

## CONVERSATION TIPS

Repeat back what you hear. This makes people feel that you are paying attention.

Use open-ended questions that can't be answered yes or no. This helps you understand them.

Affirm the positive in what you hear. This makes people feel respected.

Avoid correcting misinformation directly. Most people are trying to do what's best for them and their families.

SCRIPT .....▶

## SCRIPT

If you have an “Ask Me About the COVID-19 Vaccine” flyer posted nearby, patients may begin the conversation. Otherwise, begin by asking:

### STAFF MEMBER      PATIENT

*Are you planning to get the COVID-19 vaccine?*

→If yes:

*Great! Can I help you make an appointment or schedule a text or telephone reminder for later? [END SCRIPTED CONVERSATION]*

→If no:

*Oh, why not?*

[PATIENT'S QUESTION OR CONCERN]

*So you aren't planning to get the COVID-19 vaccine because you think [REPEAT PATIENT'S CONCERN]? Can you tell me more about that?*

...

#### IMPORTANT

If someone doesn't want to talk, that's fine. Don't push. What's most important is that people feel respected.

*It's great that you are thinking about these issues. You're trying to protect yourself and your family.*

#### OPTIONAL

Continue talking following the **Conversation Tips** above.

*You're worried that [REPEAT PATIENT'S CONCERN]. [SUMMARIZE WHAT PATIENT HAS TOLD YOU ABOUT IT, INCLUDING ANY CONFLICTING INFORMATION.]*

...

*Doctors and nurses do recommend that everyone get the COVID-19 vaccine. When people are concerned about [PATIENT'S CONCERN], they usually say [RESPONSE TO THAT CONCERN].*

...

*I'm glad we had this talk. If it makes you think differently about getting the COVID-19 vaccine, I'm happy to make you an appointment or remind you to later. Or, if you'd like to have a longer conversation about your concerns, I can arrange for you to talk with our vaccine ambassador or for a nurse to call you. Good luck with your decision, and have a great day.*