

Tips and Recommendations for Engaging Vaccine Hesitant Patients using ASORT

Based on pilot study feedback from pharmacists and study team

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How to Start the Conversation

- Frame the discussion around vaccines so that it's about deciding on whether to keep stock of the vaccine/if there's a demand for it, rather than making the sale.
- Advocate for receiving ALL vaccines that are due. Ask patients if they are missing any vaccines, not just the COVID vaccine. "Oh you're 65, you're due for XYZ vaccine."
- Start the ASORT process with patients you know well (family, friends of family, patients you see/call regularly) to practice and gain confidence using the method, then move on to patients who might be harder to engage.
- Identify patients who might be vaccine hesitant, and plan to have a discussion with those who come into the pharmacy regularly.

Dealing with Hesitancy

- Frame conversations around protecting elderly or immunocompromised loved ones. This makes receiving the vaccine more personalized, rather than statements about keeping the community at large safe.
- Utilize the trust you've earned as a community pharmacist. Use phrases such as, "I'm not asking you to trust them [government]. I'm asking you to trust me."

General Recommendations

- Set up prompts in pharmacy electronic system to encourage discussion about vaccines and keep track of conversations.
- Approach with mindset/resolve that it may be awkward, but you will get more comfortable with more practice.
- (If possible) Offer incentives for getting vaccinated.
- Offer to give the vaccine immediately rather than scheduling an appointment.

Common Patient Concerns We Heard

(see Addressing Vaccine Concerns tab on ASORT website for response examples)

- Political mistrust and misinformation
- Lack of trust in vaccine efficacy
- Secondhand account of someone having an adverse reaction or getting COVID despite the vaccine
- Safety/side effect concerns

Pharmacist Tips and Quotes

How To Start the Conversation

Tip	Pharmacist Quote
<p>Frame the discussion around vaccines so that it's about deciding on whether to keep stock of the vaccine/if there's a demand for it, rather than making the sale. One pharmacist was very successful in starting discussions with hesitant patients using this tactic.</p>	<p><i>"I started phrasing my interviews with 'Hey, we're trying to decide if we're gonna stock this come fall, see how much demand we have. Because, you know, government's not footing the bill anymore. So we don't want to buy it if nobody wants it.' I mean, that was a good segue to the conversation, because it wasn't me trying to make the sale. I was just trying to decide if I need to buy it or not, and I had really good success. Having these starting the conversations with that. I just seem to keep people from getting defensive right off the bat."</i></p>
<p>Advocate for receiving ALL vaccines that are due. Ask all patients if they are missing any vaccines, not just the COVID vaccine. "Oh you're 65, you're due for XYZ vaccine."</p>	<p><i>"I definitely feel like we advocate vaccines. And people know that we give vaccines here. I would say more times than not. People come to us and ask us about what you know their next. Are they? People come in all the time, and they're like, "Am I missing any vaccines?"</i></p>
<p>Start the ASORT process with patients you know well (family, friends of family, patients you see/call regularly) to practice and gain confidence in using the method, then move on to patients who might be harder to engage.</p>	<p><i>"So I said, Well, I'm gonna start with my Sync patients, I'm already calling them once a month. So I started with the patients that I knew really well. You know, patients that were family, family friends, families of you know, people that worked here that fit the part criteria started with them because it was. You know, they're not going to get defensive with me. They're not going to get mad and say, Well, how dare you ask me? And so I started there. ... Then I started work on those patients that I was like, okay, this might be a more difficult conversation, or, you know, an elderly patient. ... Cause I probably out of think I've done about 40. I had about 10 or 15 that said yes, they would be interested in it in the shot. So that surprised me cause initially, everybody was like, absolutely not. I don't want it. I'm not interested in it."</i></p>

<p>Identify patients who might be vaccine hesitant, and plan to have a discussion with those who come into the pharmacy regularly.</p>	<p><i>“So we had that list printed out, and kind of reviewed it every day. As far as you know, Mrs. [Jones] hasn't come in, but we know she's coming in next week to get her medicine, because she comes in once a month. Whoever sees her needs having a conversation. So just being able to run that report, identify those subsets, as far as you know.”</i></p>
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Dealing with Hesitancy

Tip	Pharmacist Quote
<p>Frame conversations around protecting elderly or immunocompromised loved ones. This makes receiving the vaccine more personalized, rather than statements about keeping the community at large safe.</p>	<p><i>“Like I said we know basically everybody that comes in. We know who they're related to, that type of deal. ... Here's people who we think may be on the fence. Here's people that we know are going to get it if we just mentioned that we have it in stock, they just haven't called us. And then here's the patients that haven't gotten vaccinated, only got vaccinated for work, or anti-vaxxers, that type of deal. So that's just kind of how we navigated that. But we pretty much know all our patients so staff's very familiar with the patient population, and then just trying to be able to identify those subsets - talk to them when they come in.”</i></p>
<p>Utilize the trust you've earned as a community pharmacist. Pharmacists found it successful to use phrases such as, “I'm not asking you to trust them [government]. I'm asking you to trust me.”</p>	<p><i>“... And I think that actually came from the website where it's like, 'Well, I'm not asking you to trust them. I'm asking you to trust me.' And I thought that was a really powerful line because it's independent pharmacy. I'm supposed to have these relationships. So I felt like that would resonate but if I just kind of read that like I mean, you can trust me. You can. I've read the studies. The studies are good, like it, just you know you had to sell it and to sell it, I had to believe it.”</i></p>

General Recommendations

Tip	Pharmacist Quote
<p>Set up prompts in pharmacy electronic system to encourage discussion about</p>	<p><i>“Ask them like, have you gotten the [vaccine]? If not, is there a reason why not and then, that, you know, gives a little bit of like pinpoint. So like what you want to review with the patient. And then there's like a multiple choice that you can choose on like. If this</i></p>

<p>vaccines and keep track of conversations.</p>	<p><i>patient decided to get the vaccine, or if there's still hesitation, or what that hesitation was, or just different things, you could click on and you submit it. So that data is going somewhere automatically. So I feel like something like that be something that would be easy people's and could go along with their workflow."</i></p>
<p>Approach with mindset/resolve that it may be awkward, but you will get more comfortable with more practice.</p>	<p><i>"You just have to kind of get in there and let the first few be awkward, and then you get comfortable as you go along."</i></p>
<p>(If possible) Offer incentives for getting vaccinated.</p>	<p>(here the pharmacist is explaining a state- and grant-funded program that was source of funding early on when the Covid vaccine was being promoted – patients got a gift card for getting vaccine; pharmacists got a matching gift card for administering the vaccine, and pharmacies/facilities got a matching gift card for every shot that was given and suggests money as incentive for vaccines) <i>"...okay, so it was grants, and it was state-specific. So I know [state redacted] was included, and I don't know what other ones are so basically for every shot that was given, and it doesn't have to be this much, but I'm just using it as an example, the patient received a \$50 visa gift card that the immunizer receives a \$50 card, and then the facility received a \$50 card for each covid vaccine that was given. So rural South [state redacted] very low income, you know. My patients would be more apt to have the conversation, or even potentially get the vaccine if there was money involved. So the study I'm referring to is some kind of CFD study. The patient gets something for signing up for the study and then they do all these interviews and stuff like that, even like a \$10 gift card. You could advertise that. Say, "Hey, our Internet's all drugs participating in this COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy" then, 'Would you be interested? And you would receive a \$10 gift card?' Or just, you know, using that as an example? I think, would help assist the study as far as growing the patient population."</i></p>
<p>Offer to give the vaccine immediately rather than scheduling an appointment.</p>	<p><i>"We can do it right now, no appointment needed"</i> Pharmacist thought it was an advantage for convenience to provide vaccine immediately rather than scheduling appointments and has had success in piquing interest from other patients in the store when he offered the vaccine.</p>