Overcoming barriers to COVID-19 vaccination

Rooted NWA and UAMS Community Health and Research

UAMS and Rooted NWA worked with the Hispanic community in Northwest Arkansas to determine how to create a better path toward COVID-19 vaccination together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation to vaccine clinics can be difficult, and <strong>public transportation is not always available in Northwest Arkansas.</strong></td>
<td>We offer mobile vaccine <strong>where the community lives</strong> (i.e., St. Raphael’s Catholic Church, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructions on where to go to get the vaccine are <strong>not always specific.</strong> Vaccine clinics can be hard to locate within a large business or area.</td>
<td>Transportation assistance has been provided through <strong>United Way/211</strong> and through partnering organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>It can be hard to make an appointment</strong> for those who have trouble with the phone or Internet, or who do not speak English.</td>
<td>We provide <strong>clear, in-language instruction</strong> on how to get to vaccine events, and offer flyers for each of our events in Spanish.</td>
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<td>Many people lack insurance and avoid vaccination due to <strong>cost concerns.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Walk-ups are encouraged</strong> at all of our vaccine sites. We have also made registration for events easier, and have hired members of the community to help people get through the entire vaccination process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We clearly communicate that COVID-19 vaccines <strong>cost nothing to the patient,</strong> and have <strong>embedded community health workers</strong> to help patients navigate the healthcare system.</td>
<td>If a patient is interested in obtaining health insurance, or has questions regarding other areas of healthcare, <strong>our community health workers are available to help.</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Overcoming barriers to COVID-19 vaccination

### Getting the correct information

#### Barriers

- **Language barriers** make getting the vaccination or information about the vaccine very difficult.

  Vaccine events may not be equipped with staff who speak Spanish, so Spanish-speaking patients are unable to have questions answered in a way that is understandable to them.

- Technical or academic language about the vaccine can be hard to understand. Vaccine information should be delivered at a more basic level.

#### Solutions

- **Spanish-speaking community health workers have been hired** to help the Hispanic community obtain accurate information about the COVID-19 vaccine and local vaccine events.

  We provide information in Spanish at every part of the vaccine process, and in language that is easily understood:

  - Flyers, educational materials and social media posts are all created in Spanish and shared with community partners
  - Launched digital ad campaigns and with La Prensa, La Zeta, Pandora & Spotify to reach Hispanic populations
  - Spanish-speaking staff and community health workers are on-hand at every vaccine event to translate and explain information

  We utilize local media and social media to distribute information that is in-language and at an appropriate literacy level so Spanish-speaking community members have constant access to accurate information.

### Immigration status & documentation

#### Barriers

- Many people are afraid that vaccination sites may be a way to identify undocumented immigrants and send them back to their countries.

  Many are afraid to provide personal information at vaccination sites.

#### Solutions

- We communicate in advertisements and flyers for our vaccine events that proof of citizenship or legal status, a Social Security number, and insurance are not required for vaccination.

  While we ask for a Social Security number at the UAMS drive-thru, we do not require one be given to receive vaccination.