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Empowering Patients: Navigating the New COVID Vaccine in Fall

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Empowering Patients: Navigating the New COVID Vaccine in Fall

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Problem Identification.



- At Newtown primary care, patients frequently feel overwhelmed by the amount of information available in the digital era. This is common throughout the nation, as patients often have pre-formed notions or opinions from online sources before speaking to their healthcare provider [1].
- For the COVID vaccine in particular, it has become an especially sensitive topic in some communities due to its politicization. This is also linked with its rapid development compared to other vaccines.
- Even among patients who are compliant with vaccinations, they often do not understand or are too pressed for time to learn why they receive vaccines or how they work.
- This project seeks to provide more accessible, factual, trustworthy information to patients who are seeking it or to patients who may be on the fence. It is not meant to sway patients who are firm in their beliefs.

Public health cost

Vaccines reduce the spread of diseases which can be costly in terms of emergency healthcare response, hospitalizations, and accompanying short term .

Widespread vaccination prevent chronic conditions and their complications, reducing costs associated with long-term healthcare [2]

A healthier community is also a more productive community that promotes economic growth, boosting all parties including healthcare [3]

In Connecticut, the weekly COVID-19 associated hospitalization rate per 100,000 is 5.1, higher than the rest of surveyed areas at 4.6 [4].



Community Perspectives

"I really think we could be doing a lot more to help patients understand vaccines. I see people all the time who just don't get how they work."

-Anonymous MA at Newtown

"As someone who talks with neighbors and friends, I can tell you a lot of people are still unsure about vaccines. There's just so much conflicting information out there, it's hard for them to know what's true."

-Anonymous Community Member



Intervention

- A double-sided trifold pamphlet was developed to provide basic, essential information about COVID-19, especially highlighting that new vaccines are coming this fall.
- It also includes the importance of booster shots, what's in the vaccines, and who should get it.

Methodology

- Providers and patients continue to engage in important discussion about vaccinations as usual. Afterwards, patients can be offered the informative pamphlet as supplementation.
- Pamphlet can also be placed in waiting room.
- Pamphlet available in offline, printed form for easy distribution and accessibility without need for smartphone or computer.

Results

**PROTECT YOURSELF,
YOUR LOVED ONES,
AND YOUR
COMMUNITY**

**GET THE COVID
VACCINE TODAY!**

WHAT IS THIS BROCHURE FOR...

This brochure gives you important information about the new COVID-19 vaccines. It explains why getting the vaccine is a good idea, who should get it, and where you can find it. It's here to help you understand how the vaccine keeps you and others safe.

**"GET READY FOR THE NEW
COVID-19 VACCINES
ARRIVING THIS FALL!"**

COVID



WHAT IS THE COVID VACCINE?

The COVID vaccine helps your body learn how to fight off the [virus](#) so you don't get sick. A booster is an extra shot you get after the vaccine to make sure your body stays strong and ready to protect you. Both the vaccine and the booster help keep you and others around you safe from COVID-19.

Patients need this new booster because it helps keep their protection against COVID-19 strong, especially as the virus changes over time. It's like giving your immune system a refresher course to stay ready and effective against the latest versions of the virus.



WHAT IS IN IT? IS THE VACCINE SAFE?

The COVID vaccine contains tiny pieces of the virus's genetic material or proteins, but not the live virus itself, so it can't make you sick. These pieces teach your body how to recognize and fight the virus.

The vaccine is safe and has been tested by scientists and doctors in large studies to make sure it works well and doesn't cause serious side effects.



WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

Everyone who can, including adults and children, should get the COVID vaccine. It's especially important for people with health conditions, older adults, and those who work in places where they might be exposed to the virus.

Getting vaccinated helps protect you and the people around you from getting seriously sick.



Evaluation of Effectiveness and Limitations

- A full evaluation was not possible due to limitation of timeframe.
- Extension of this project would involve data collection in the form of patient feedback during appointments, and number of pamphlets taken throughout the day.
- More intensive options could also include surveys regarding readability and understanding.
- Could also assess new questions in the next appointment.
- The pamphlet is only available in English, limiting its accessibility to English speakers.
- Pamphlets provide only one-way communication, which relate to its nature of low engagement as a supplementary piece.
- Physical pamphlets contribute to paper waste and are difficult to update.



Recommendations for Future Interventions

- Future initiatives should include educational material on other vaccines such as influenza, HPV, and pneumococcal vaccines. Although these generally are less contested than COVID vaccines, they have their unique challenges in noncompliance.
- QR code for to encourage continued engagement and feedback from patients. This additionally allows patients to easily view updated or additional resources.
- More languages available, such as Spanish and Portuguese, would provide broader accessibility for a diverse patient population. This can be especially useful as language barriers usually are under-addressed during the limited time of an office visit.

References

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