

Memo

To: Governing Body

From: Chris Verbrugge, City Management Intern

CC: Keith Moody, Donnie Scharff, John Morris, Kelley Nielsen,
Erin Winn

RE: Discussing COVID-19 Vaccines.



Dear Governing Body,

The discussions surrounding the COVID-19 vaccines are important and potentially fraught. As vaccination rates slowly increase, it is crucial that we continue to encourage those who are unvaccinated but are eligible to receive the vaccine to do so.

Please find below information regarding how to go about discussing these vaccines and convincing eligible people to receive the vaccine if they have yet to receive it. The reasons some are reluctant to get vaccinated are varied, but we know that people receiving the vaccination is the number one way to conquer this pandemic and promote and strive for a healthy society.

The steps in discussing vaccines with someone does require emotional intelligence.

First, find their number one reason for hesitancy. There is a significant amount of mis- and disinformation about the COVID-19 vaccines, but there is usually one main issue a person may have heard that's giving them hesitancy.

Do not mock people, and do not shame. Empathize with some of these root causes. It's totally normal to be concerned. Ask them some follow-up questions and really get to know why they have been hesitant. Genuine curiosity is the key in these situations.

Second, share your own personal experience with receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. If someone is obtaining false or flawed information, it might be that they do not trust traditional institutions and systems, or traditional vetted reporting. It may be counter-intuitive to send a flurry of response statistics or articles. Shame is not persuasive.

People respond to personal stories from people they know. Talking to a friend of a friend of a friend may not be super effective, however, speaking with a friend will be. Share your story about receiving your vaccines and ask them if they have any questions about your experiences. Do not be judgmental. Continue to build an understanding between yourselves.

Third, offer aid to lift logistical barrier. Many do not know, or may not believe, that the vaccine is free. Through your personal story, you can remind them that the vaccine is free, and you can offer a ride, or show them how to make an appointment, or address whatever logistical hesitancy they may have. There are many resources regarding where to find vaccines that you may show them.

It is important to remember that shame and embarrassment are not the best motivators. Genuine, personal understanding is the best approach.

Sincerely,

Chris Verbrugge