



Increasing Uptake of the Updated COVID-19 Vaccine (2023-2024 Formulation): Why and How?

Please see below for key talking points on increasing uptake for the 2023-2024 formulation of the COVID-19 vaccine and building vaccine confidence in general. Please also view our 10/20/23 presentation “*Building Trust and Effective Vaccination Programs in Nursing Homes*” [slides](#) and [recording](#).

- **COVID-19 is still harming our nursing home population:** Older adults and those who have many chronic medical conditions continue to get hospitalized and die from COVID at a significantly higher rate compared to others. This is true even throughout 2023.
- **Keeping up to date with the COVID-19 vaccine makes a difference:** Those who are up to date with the latest recommended vaccination have a *much* lower risk of getting hospitalized and dying compared to those who have not received the latest recommended vaccine. This is especially true for older adults due to waning immunity. The latest updated vaccine is formulated to protect against the XBB subvariants that are circulating right now.
- **Why? (Residents):** Based on all available evidence, the best way for a nursing home resident to not get very sick from COVID-19 this winter season even if their facility gets an outbreak is to get maintain and boost their immunity by getting the latest updated vaccine that is formulated against the variants circulating now.
- **Why? (Staff):** Based on all available evidence, this is the best way to protect your residents, yourself, your colleagues, your family members, and your community. Remember, our first oath to our patients is to “first, do no harm.”
- **How?**
 - Always approach with **kindness, patience, and understanding** while being confident.
 - **Highlight the positives:** Talk up the people who are planning or have already received the updated vaccine and emphasize the “why” behind their decisions. Use this to find common ground with each other.
 - **Align with common values and goals** for both residents and staff: For residents, it might be to avoid getting hospitalized, keeping the medication list short, a better quality of life. For staff, it might be to protect their residents, protect anyone at home who is high risk, avoid being out sick too much.
- **Bottom line for the SNF IP or person in charge of vaccination:** This is a huge responsibility, and Public Health is here to support you. Do not give up – the key to success is persistence, which means trying everything multiple times from holding multiple clinics to using multiple strategies. Facilities with high vaccination coverages do not achieve them overnight and with just a single try. Just as importantly, please ask for help and gain buy-in from others at your facility. Public Health recommends the entire facility leadership team including the administrator, director of nursing, director of staff development, and all department supervisors or managers to be actively engaged with their facility’s vaccination program. It truly takes a village.

Sources:

- Havers, F. “COVID-19 Epidemiology.” ACIP Meeting 9/12/23. Accessed online: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/slides-2023-09-12.html>
- Wallace, M. “Evidence to Recommendations.” ACIP Meeting 9/12/23. Accessed online: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/slides-2023-09-12.html>
- Menni, C., et. al. “COVID-19 vaccine waning and effectiveness and side-effects of boosters: a prospective community study from the ZOE COVID Study.” *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*. July 2022. Accessed online: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(22\)00146-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(22)00146-3/fulltext)

