

TIPS FOR DISCUSSING COVID VACCINE WITH STAFF WHO HAVE CONCERNS

When you are with a staff member who tells you that they don't want to have their vaccination, telling them to do it or going straight into reasons why they should is unlikely to persuade them.

Replying to a decline with something like, "that's ok, you don't have to have it. Getting people vaccinated is an important part of managing a pandemic. It's especially important for staff who are working in higher risk environments such as ours, so if it's ok with you, I'd like to better understand the concerns that you have", may be more likely to start a conversation.

Below are some key tips to help you get the most out of the conversation:

1. Help them to feel comfortable – have the conversation in a comfortable, confidential space, not in a busy corridor.
2. Don't judge – people's concerns will be real to them. Allow them to finish telling you what they are worried or concerned about, and don't interrupt them with counter-arguments. Some people may be afraid of having the vaccination, and fear can be a strong emotion.
3. Be empathetic – show understanding of where the person is coming from.
4. Listen properly – use any active listening skills that you have. Some key ones are:
 - Have good eye contact and an open posture
 - Summarizing what the person is saying to you lets them know that they are being heard.
 - Using phrases like "so it sounds like...." or "it seems that...." can be helpful.
5. Refer to beliefs that are worrying them as 'concerns' rather than 'myths'; a myth isn't true so using the word to describe someone's genuine concern instantly dismisses it.
6. Use evidence to show some points that may be helpful (depending on what the concern is) e.g.:
 - Vaccinations are widely used in this country to keep control of other diseases that are known to spread easily and can be fatal, such as TB or measles. Thousands of people have these vaccinations every year with no ill-effects.
7. Use credible sources of information – if information giving is something that might be helpful to the person, make sure that the source of the information is someone that you both agree is trustworthy. NHS has good information relating to vaccines, as do many organisations that represent specific communities and beliefs, such as:
 - **Muslim Council of Britain www.mcb.org.uk**
 - **Catholic Church www.cbcew.org.uk**
 - **Vegan Society www.vegansociety.com**