COVID-19 VACCINE EDUCATION and EQUITY PROJECT

February 2021
Convening Organizations

Over 150 partner organizations have joined the project since launch.

Initial support for the COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Equity Project has been provided by Pfizer, Inc.
Core Objectives

Open dialogue, engagement and effective communication is important to address the skepticism around vaccines that exists among many people and in many communities. Additionally, building confidence in the process and the science is key for authorized and approved vaccines to be a contributor to addressing health inequities that exist generally and specifically with respect to COVID-19. To achieve its mission, the COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Equity Project seeks to:

- **Provide education on, and advocate for, adherence to a gold-standard regulatory review process**
- **Promote the impact of widespread COVID-19 vaccination uptake in protecting individuals, families, and communities**
- **Raise awareness around the importance of COVID-19 vaccination for public health, the economy and broader society**
- **Lead a conversation that helps ensure equitable access to authorized and approved vaccines through equitable access to information and dialogue**
150+ Diverse Stakeholders Engaged
COVID-19 vaccines hold the best hope to get our lives and our economy back on track.

Education and equity will be key to that success.

WHAT WE STAND FOR
A return to normal relies on communicating transparent, scientifically accurate information about vaccines and vaccine technology— including what we know and what we still need to learn. Building confidence in the process and the science is key for vaccines to be a contributor to addressing health inequities that exist generally and specifically with respect to COVID-19.
**COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Equity Project**

**PROJECT MISSION**

As leading organizational partners representing patients, caregivers and families, diverse populations, healthcare workers, older Americans, veterans, families affected by HIV/AIDS, scientific and academic societies, and many other entities working to mitigate the effects of and access to approved COVID-19 vaccine across the country, we have the confidence to be theiest, most trusted, and most consistent COVID-19 vaccine. Providing COVID-19 vaccine to underserved communities needs to be successful and equitable. We are working together to develop a COVID-19 vaccine outreach and engagement campaign.

**PRINCIPLES OF THE PROJECT**

- **Volunteerism:** Volunteers are integral to the project and provide the backbone for success. Volunteers are the ones who will reach out to families and communities to educate them about the vaccine.
- **Equitable Access:** Access to COVID-19 vaccine is critical for all populations. We believe in providing equitable access to vaccine.
- **Data-Driven:** We use data to inform our strategies and decisions. This ensures that our efforts are effective and reach the right people.
- **Respect:** We respect the autonomy and values of each individual and community.
- **Collaboration:** We work closely with community partners, healthcare providers, and other organizations to ensure the success of our project.

**CORE OBJECTIVES**

- **Equitable Access:** We aim to ensure that the vaccine is accessible to all communities and populations, including those historically marginalized.
- **Education:** We provide information about COVID-19 and the vaccine to the public.
- **Collaboration:** We work with community partners, stakeholders, and other organizations to achieve our goals.
- **Data-Driven:** We use data to inform our strategies and decisions.
- **Equitable Engagement:** We ensure that all communities have access to the vaccine.

**HEALTH DISPARITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19:**

Racial and Ethnic Minorities Disproportionately Impacted by Coronavirus

Health disparities have played a major role in the development of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following are some of the key health disparities:

- **Socioeconomic Disparities:** People living in poverty are more likely to be affected by COVID-19.
- **Genetic Disparities:** People of certain racial and ethnic groups have a higher risk of developing severe COVID-19.
- **Healthcare Disparities:** People from minority backgrounds have less access to healthcare services.

**Equitable Access and Acceptance of Vaccines:**

Equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines is critical to ensure that all populations are protected.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE:**

COVID-19 has put a spotlight on the importance of access to healthcare. It has highlighted the need for equitable access to vaccines.

**Equitable Access:**

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**TALKING TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINATION**

After months of development, vaccines for COVID-19 are now being authorized and recommended for use in the United States.

**FACTS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS**

- **Vaccines are safe:** The vaccines have been rigorously tested and have shown to be safe and effective.
- **Side effects:** Some people may experience side effects after getting vaccinated, but these are usually mild and short-lived.
- **What to expect:** After getting vaccinated, you may experience mild side effects like fever, soreness at the injection site, and fatigue.

**How can I trust that COVID-19 vaccines are safe?**

**COVID-19 Vaccines are approved following an established, peer-reviewed process.**

- **Research:** The vaccines are the result of extensive research and development.
- **Testing:** The vaccines have been tested in clinical trials to ensure their safety and effectiveness.
- **Regulatory Review:** The vaccines have been reviewed and approved by regulatory agencies.

**What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?**

- **Fever:** Some people may experience fever after getting vaccinated.
- **Soreness:** You may experience soreness at the injection site.
- **Fatigue:** You may feel tired after getting vaccinated.

**Who should get vaccinated?**

- **Older Adults:** People over the age of 65 should get vaccinated.
- **High-Risk Individuals:** People with underlying health conditions should get vaccinated.
- **Essential Workers:** People working in essential jobs like healthcare and public safety should get vaccinated.

**Additional Resources:**

Sample Project Materials

VACCINE APPROVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

“At the FDA, we uphold globally respected standards for product quality, safety, and efficacy. We monitor the entire process of vaccine development from beginning to end and then follow these products after they are made available to the public.”

— Dr. Peter Marks, Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

COVID-19 vaccine development is following the FDA’s gold-standard review process that includes research, multi-stage clinical trials, robust regulatory review and approvals, and ongoing safety monitoring once a vaccine becomes publicly available.

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**Research**

Lab testing identifies antigens that can prevent diseases and assesses the ability and safety of causing an immune response.

If a vaccine candidate progresses past this stage, the sponsor submits an Investigational New Drug application to the FDA.

This application describes the proposed clinical trial process.

**Clinical Trials**

The vaccine sponsor is requested to complete three progressive phases of human testing, starting with validating that the vaccine is safe in healthy people. Later phases test whether the vaccine produces an effective and immune response.

Clinical trial protocols are reviewed by regulatory authorities and approved by an institutional review board, which is an independent committee that reviews the methods proposed for research.

Clinical trials are overseen by a group of independent experts called the Data and Safety Monitoring Committee. Trial investigators are also responsible for monitoring participant health, and participants in the trial have regular follow-ups.

**Regulatory Review & Approval**

If human clinical trials are successful, the sponsor will submit a biologic license application (BLA) or an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to the FDA.

Before FDA grants a license to manufacture the vaccine, FDAs vaccines and related biological products advisory committee (VRBPAC) will review and evaluate data during a public meeting to make a recommendation on the application status.

After a vaccine is approved by the FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) develops and distributes recommendations on the use of the vaccine.

**Post-Approval Safety Monitoring**

After a vaccine is licensed, CDC continues monitoring for vaccine safety.

Surveillance activities include the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), a national system used by scientists at FDA and the CDC to collect reports of adverse events (possible side effects) that happen after vaccination.

Scientists use CDC’s Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD), an ongoing collaboration between CDC and healthcare organizations, to help determine if possible side effects identified using VAERS are related to vaccination.
Convening Stakeholder Dialogue

Building Vaccine Confidence in Diverse Communities Webinar / Wednesday, Feb. 17 (12:30-1:30pm ET)

- In partnership with WUSA9 – Washington, DC’s CBS affiliate – the project is hosting a virtual panel discussion moderated by WUSA9 Anchor Lesli Foster. WUSA9 will share a post-event recap on their website and social platforms. Panelists include:
  - Anita Jenkins, CEO, Howard University Hospital: will discuss the role of employers and health care professionals in building confidence in COVID-19 vaccines, especially in diverse communities.
  - Dr. Uzma Syed, infectious disease specialist, COVID-19 Task Force Chair at Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center, and American Muslim Health Professionals partner representative: will focus on what she tells patients about the importance of COVID-19 vaccines, approaches and tactics she has found to work, and considerations for cultural competency in these conversations.
  - Dr. Tinisha Cheatham, Physician in Chief, Baltimore, Kaiser Permanente: will discuss the types of questions she receives from patients and the importance of having a forum to share information.
  - Dr. Reed Tuckson, head of the Black Coalition Against COVID-19: will discuss efforts to engage Black providers in delivering culturally relevant information and building trust around COVID-19 vaccines.
“Count Me In” Campaign

The project is building a “Count Me In” campaign that leverages the influence of early adopters to increase social norms in favor of COVID-19 vaccination, anticipated for a late February launch.

The campaign will provide individuals and organizations with information to build confidence in available vaccines and tools to express participation in efforts to return to normal.

Individuals to Appear in Campaign Advertising
To bring the campaign to life, the project is developing creative concepts featuring compelling individuals from organizations on the front lines of the pandemic, proactively connecting with partners that represent healthcare professionals, long-term care facilities and essential workers. The creative concepts developed featuring organizational leaders will be used in potential advertising, social media posts, blog posts on the project’s website, and in press outreach about the campaign.

Individual Submissions for the “Count Me In” Photo Wall
The project will also feature a variety of people from all walks of life as part of a “Be Counted” photo wall, which will live on covidvaccineproject.org, where individuals can upload a picture of themselves along with why they want to be “counted in” to get vaccinated against COVID-19.
How You Can Participate

• Ask leadership to share photos and testimonials for the “Count Me In” campaign, so that employees and employers are represented (or connect us with local leaders)

• Distribute “Count Me In” materials on organization social media platforms

• Feature “Count Me In” campaign in employee publications

• Distribute information and updates about the COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Equity Project to your networks, partners, etc., on an ongoing basis

• Amplify bilingual materials from our online resource library through newsletters, owned channels

• Encourage employers to participate in and promote project webinars with vaccine experts

• Invite the project to present to your employees

• Follow the project on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn via @CovidVxProject and #CovidVxProject