Talking With Your LTC Staff About the COVID-19 Vaccine

How to Talk With LTC Staff About the Vaccine

- Be empathetic and acknowledge that this has been an extremely challenging year, especially for LTC staff.

- Show appreciation for everything staff has done. Recognize that they have a hard job, made even more difficult by the pandemic.

- Listen to and hear staff concerns. Respond without judgement or reproach. Reinforce their feelings with phrases like, “That is a great question.”

- Speak openly about the vaccine and be confident in your responses.

- Address all staff concerns. Do not leave any questions out when responding. There are multiple resources, such as the AHCA/NCAL #GetVaccinated webpage and AHCA/NCAL Clinical Guidance, to help answer questions you may get.

- Make eye contact to establish trust and show compassion.

- If possible, hold one-on-one conversations between leadership and staff. They may feel more comfortable asking questions in this setting.

- Provide follow up information and resources after having conversations to reinforce any concerns. Make sure follow-up is tailored to specific issues/concerns of staff.

Key Talking Points with LTC Staff

- We recognize that this has been an extremely challenging year for long term care staff and residents, as well as their loved ones. [Show empathy.]

- It is very encouraging that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has found COVID-19 vaccines to be safe and effective.

- We are pleased to be able to give the vaccine to residents and our staff.

- We are very excited to offer you the opportunity to receive this vaccine in a convenient location and at no cost. [Provide additional details on upcoming vaccine clinic – time, date, location.]

- We encourage as many staff as possible to get this vaccine.
• The elderly population has a much higher risk for getting very sick, being hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19. The vaccine has been shown to provide a great deal of protection against serious illness due to COVID-19.

• The more of us that get vaccinated, the better we can protect our families and our community against potential outbreaks. We can save lives.

• While we still have to be careful, getting vaccinated will reduce restrictions the pandemic has placed on your daily life. The CDC has also released guidance indicating that individuals who are fully vaccinated can gather in small groups and refrain from quarantine if exposed to COVID-19.

• The vaccines have gone through testing and clinical trials to ensure they meet the highest safety standards. It also is safe to get if you already had the virus.

• [For Moderna or Pfizer Vaccine Recipients] The vaccine requires two doses. You will need to get both doses to ensure the best results. The second dose will be delivered approximately 21 to 28 days after the first dose.

• Potential side effects are listed on the fact sheet. You will find that these side effects are similar to the potential side effects of the flu shot, but they occur in more people. However, the health and safety of our residents is always our top priority, and we are confident this vaccine is a much better option than the risk of getting this virus.

• We will continue to take all necessary precautions after the vaccine is administered, including wearing personal protective equipment and conducting regular testing, to ensure the safety of our residents and staff.

• We will also work with public health officials to determine how/when to adjust our policies for visitations and social activities and keep you updated.

• The vaccine will be a lifesaving turning point in the fight against COVID-19.

• Please feel free to reach back out to us if you have any additional questions. We are here to help make sure you feel comfortable with this process.

Please see the AHCA/NCAL Top Strategies to Improve Staff Vaccination Rates for more ideas on promoting staff vaccine uptake.

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