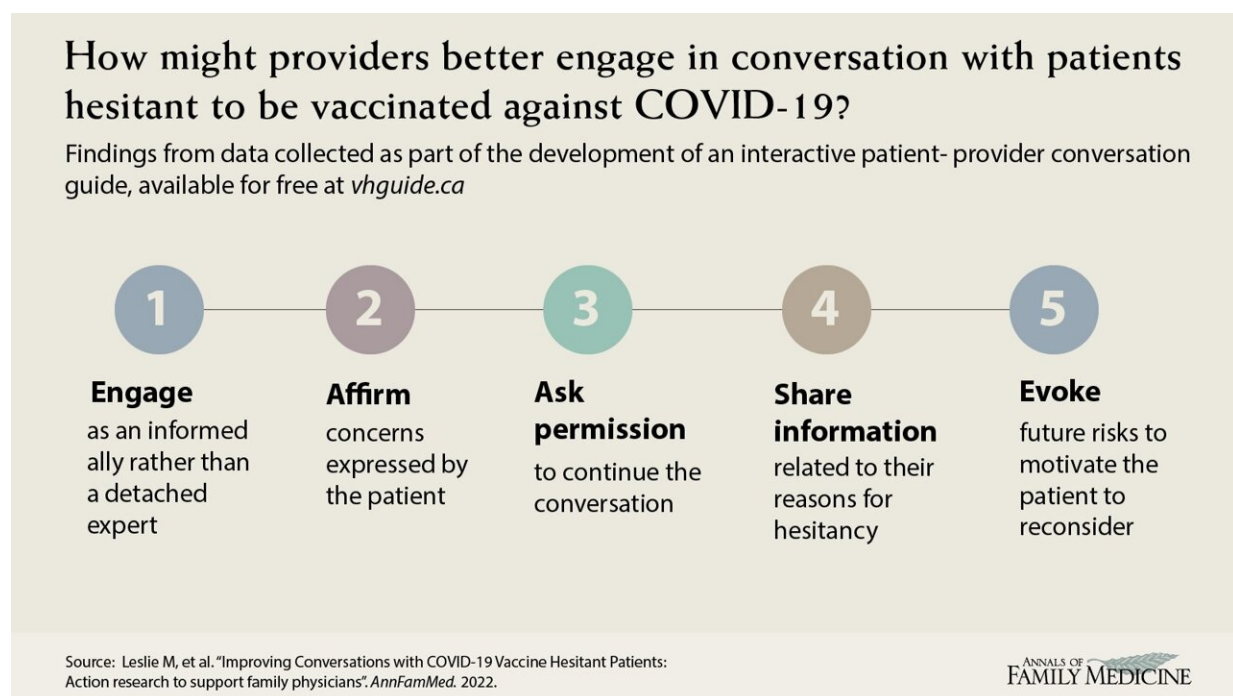


Public health researchers develop web-based guide to help family physicians address COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy

July 26 2022



How might providers better engage in conversation with patients hesitant to be vaccinated against COVID-19? Findings from data collected as part of the development of an interactive patient-provider conversation guide. Credit: Annals of Family Medicine

Public health researchers in Canada developed an interactive, web-based

guide to help family physicians better address a wide range of patient concerns related to the COVID-19 vaccine. To ensure relevancy, the researchers conducted qualitative interviews with primary care physicians in multiple Canadian provinces. The data was then used to identify commonly held beliefs, attitudes and perceptions that impact a patient's willingness to receive the vaccine.

The research team found that physicians frequently encountered many of the same reasons for COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy, including concerns around safety; interactions with co-morbidities; conspiracy theories; religious or moral restrictions; and past traumas experienced in the medical setting. Using this information, researchers created several physician resources to help better counsel vaccine-hesitant patients, in direct response to each potential concern.

Additionally, the free guide outlines four steps to help physicians have better conversations with vaccine-hesitant patients, emphasizing the physician's role as an ally on the patient's health journey. Steps include engaging with patients; affirming patient concerns; asking permission before sharing information; and evoking future risks to motivate patients to reconsider vaccine hesitancy.

The research was published in *The Annals of Family Medicine*.

Why are patients hesitant to be vaccinated against COVID-19?

Findings from qualitative interviews with primary care providers collected as part of the development of an interactive patient-provider conversation guide

RESOURCES FOR EACH HESITANCY ARE AVAILABLE FOR FREE AT [VHGUIDE.CA](https://vhguide.ca)



Safety and science concerns

Reproductive or fitness impacts, side effects, concerns about the science, worried about DNA/mRNA, medical complexity



Influenced by conspiracies



Conflicts with values or politics

Naturalist/alternative medicine, politics and government involvement



Religious or moral objections



Traumatized by health system

personal trauma, group historical trauma



Afraid of needles

Source: Leslie M, et al. "Improving Conversations with COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitant Patients: Action research to support family physicians". *AnnFamMed*. 2022.

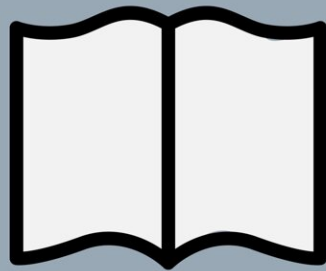
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Why are patients hesitant to be vaccinated against COVID-19? Findings from qualitative interviews with primary care providers collected as part of the development of an interactive patient-provider conversation guide. Credit: Annals of Family Medicine

How might researchers build an evidence-based tool to enable patient-provider conversations around vaccine hesitancy in the primary care setting?

Canadian “action researchers” built an interactive provider guide

1. Leverage existing theory



Review relevant literature and develop draft typology of expected hesitancies.

2. Develop hypotheses



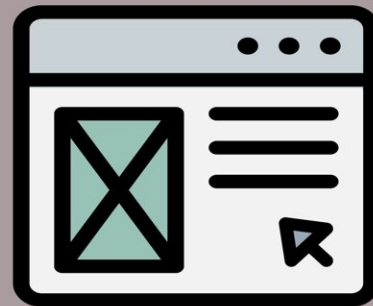
Conduct interviews with clinical experts to identify the hesitancies they encounter in-clinic. Update typology.

3. Role play conversations



Role play patient-provider conversations to gain deeper insights on how clinicians respond to hesitancies.

4. Create usable website



Use interview data to inform the structure and layout of the provider website.

Source: Leslie M, et al. “Improving Conversations with COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitant Patients: Action research to support family physicians”. *AnnFamMed*. 2022.

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More information: Myles Leslie et al, Improving Conversations With COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitant Patients: Action Research to Support Family Physicians, *The Annals of Family Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1370/afm.2816](https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.2816)

Guide: www.vhguide.ca/

Provided by American Academy of Family Physicians

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