

Example Role-play Script

Practical Approaches for Discussing COVID-19 Vaccines with Clients

Moderator: *[Name] & [Name] are going to role-play a conversation between a case manager & client. We will pause a few times during the role play to review the techniques [case manager] is using as they speak with [name] the client. The beginning of the conversation will address these two questions on the slides. While you listen to the role-play, please type in the chat what concerns you may have in answering these questions?*

Case manager: Thank you for meeting with me today. Before we end our meeting, I wanted to take a few minutes to see if you have any questions for me about the COVID vaccine. I know we don't normally talk about health together, but all [agency name] case managers at our office are taking a few minutes to check in with clients to see if they have any questions or concerns.

Client:

- I do have questions about the vaccine. I'm not really sure I need it. Do you think I should get the vaccine?

Case Manager:

- That is a really great question, I'm so glad you asked. There is a lot of information going around, and it's important to look at accurate, trusted sources in order to make the best decision for you and your family.
- The vaccine will not only help protect you, it will help protect your family and other loved ones. It's a personal choice. I did choose to get the vaccine. What I know is that when enough people get the vaccine, we will be able to see our family and friends again, and the things we do will be more normal. Again, it is important that everyone make the decision that is best for themselves, their family and community after knowing all the facts.
- I can share some fact-based resources that might help you and your family make a decision. It is important to know that people who are pregnant or have serious medical conditions, should gather the facts and talk to their doctor.

Client:

- Thanks. I'm also very afraid of needles. I don't know how I can stand getting vaccinated, especially if I have to get more than one shot. What should I do?

Case Manager:

- You're not alone in being afraid of needles. This is a very common fear and a normal question to ask as many people are not comfortable with needles. However there are many times throughout our lives where we need to have a vaccine or give blood so we who are afraid of needles end up trying to find ways to cope.
 - In the past when you've had a vaccine or given blood, how did you cope with being afraid?

Client: Before I had my family member come with me, and I told the nurse I was afraid of needles and she helped me by talking me through what she was doing and told me to look away.

Case manager: That's great. And was it as bad as you thought it would be?

Client: No I guess it wasn't. But I get so afraid ahead of time that I get really stressed and anxious.

Case manager: I get that. Another way people who are afraid of needles try to decide whether to get the COVID vaccine or not is to think about which would be worse for them – to have the needles of the vaccine or if they do get sick with COVID and have complications, the needles from the interventions that the hospital may have to do to help you when you're really sick. Some people find they're less afraid of the vaccine needles when thinking about needles they may need if they get really sick.

Moderator: *In answering these two questions you'll see that [case manager] did not say "you should get the vaccine". Instead, they demonstrated their role as a trusted source to point people to reputable resources. They shared their personal experience and encouraged [client] to make the decision that is best for them and their family. [Case manager] also let [client] know that having questions or concerns is normal and practices empathetic listening especially with their fear of needles. For this next part of the conversation please type in the chat how you would approach this question.*

Client:

- And is the vaccine truly halal? I don't know what the vaccine is made of, I've heard it contains pork and other products.

Case Manager:

- Good question. That's another question we've heard from many clients. I am by no means an expert so I've consulted my IRC colleagues who identify as Muslim who shared that:
- The vaccine has been determined to be Halal by many Islamic religious leaders and scholars. The vaccines have received stamps of approval from lots of Muslim religious leaders, scholars, and organizations including the British Islamic Medical Association, the Assembly of Muslim jurists of America and the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia.

Moderator: *Here [case manager] is building up trust and staying within their knowledge base. [Case manager] acknowledges that they are not an expert and explains where they've heard this information from reputable sources. Next slide please. As [case manager] and [client] continue their conversation type in the chat what materials you might need to answer these questions.*

Client:

- I just don't think the vaccine is safe. I've heard so many bad things about the vaccine and seen videos on Facebook of people having bad reactions. My neighbor says it can change my DNA and make it so I can't have children. It can't be that safe if they developed the vaccine so quickly, can it?

Case Manager:

- I can tell that you care a lot about your family by wanting to gather all the information you can about the safety of the vaccine before making a decision.
- There is a lot of information about the COVID-19 vaccine – some of it factual and some of it not true. The most important thing is for you to go to sources that are reliable and that use studied, scientific facts. This will allow you to get all of the information you need to make the best decision for you and your family. Sometimes it is also helpful to talk to someone you trust and whom you know has accurate information – like a doctor, nurse or a community health worker. Many of these professionals have already gotten the vaccine so they can also tell you about their experience.
- The vaccine was tested on tens of thousands of individuals from different ethnicities and ages, and it met US Food and Drug Administration's high scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing. From December 2020 to March 2021, over 109 million doses of the vaccine have been given in the United States. Its safety has been closely monitored.

Client:

- Ok. I also don't understand why I should get the vaccine. I heard that the CDC said we don't have to wear masks anymore. Doesn't that mean COVID is over?

Case Manager:

- o That is a question many people are asking right now and I can see how it is confusing. The CDC has said that those who are **fully** vaccinated no longer need to wear masks in most situations. However there are times when masks are still required such as when traveling and in healthcare settings. Each state and local businesses are also deciding their own rules about masks.
- o The research is still trying to determine how long vaccines protect us and whether vaccinated people can spread COVID. For our loved ones and neighbors' sake, and for children who can't get vaccinated yet, wearing a mask if you can helps keep everyone safe.
- o Also, if you have not been vaccinated, you still need to wear a mask as before. This is to protect yourself and others from COVID. COVID is still infecting tens of thousands of people per day in the US and many people are dying. In order to stop COVID we need as many people as possible to receive the vaccine.
- o Again the CDC is saying that only fully vaccinated people can go without masks in certain situations. We're encouraging all clients to get the facts about the vaccine and to make a decision for themselves and their families. This new CDC guidance about masks is one more thing that you can consider when deciding whether or not to get vaccinated – that if you get vaccinated you have more flexibility in when to wear your mask versus not getting vaccinated and having to continue wearing a mask.

Moderator: *It can be tricky countering misinformation without repeating the misinformation. However, studies have shown that repeating misinformation, even if trying to say that it's not true, actually increases the chance that a person will remember the myth. [Case manager] also doesn't tell [client] they're wrong. Instead [case manager] tries to facilitate [client's] self-learning by pointing them towards trusted scientific sources and sharing some facts, while staying within [case manager's] knowledge base as a non-clinician. Next slide please. This is the last part of the role-play. Don't forget to type in the chat how you would respond to this question.*

Client:

- I'm really worried there is a focus on refugees and immigrants because they are targeting us. Are they trying to test the vaccine on us? Can you tell me why is everyone so interested in having refugees and immigrants get the vaccine?

Case Manager:

- I appreciate you sharing this concern with me. Institutions like the CDC are trying to give greater access and opportunities to support communities that face disproportionate barriers.
- There can be lots of barriers to getting the vaccine! For instance, many times you have to sign up to get the vaccine on a computer and all the instructions are in English. Sometimes you have to print out and complete a form which means you have to have access to a printer. Being able to take time off from work, or having a car to get to a vaccine site, can also be barriers. These barriers can make it much harder for refugees and immigrants to get the vaccine.
- Did that address all of your questions? I'm happy to follow up with the relevant resources in your language in any of the topics we talked about

Client: Thank you I would like some resources please.

Moderator: *Here [case manager] is again normalizing [client's] questions about the vaccine and through their non-judgmental response is building trust where [client] can feel safe bringing these concerns to [case manager]. [Case manager] is also facilitating [client's] self-learning through accessible materials and autonomous decision making by offering to share resources in [client's] preferred language.*