

Trusted Messenger Discussion Guide

Trusted Messenger is a PBS documentary that follows a diverse ensemble of healthcare professionals as they set out to gain the trust of communities of color across Minnesota during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resulting film highlights community-led efforts to overcome vaccine hesitancy and bring the pandemic under control.

The film can be used as a professional development opportunity among healthcare workers, public health workers, government officials and others. Discuss the following questions with colleagues before and after watching the film.

Before the film

- Do you think people who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) are disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic? Why or why not?
- Why do you think some people who identify as BIPOC might distrust the vaccine?
- Are there trusted places, other than a healthcare setting, that you think would be good for vaccine education and roll-out?
- Who are trusted sources of information about COVID-19 vaccines?
- How do you discuss COVID-19 vaccines with clients or patients who are hesitant? Do you have examples of when you feel the conversation went well, regardless of whether the individual got the vaccine?

After the film

- Did you gain insights on the reasons some people are concerned about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine? How was this notable within BIPOC communities?
- Barbers' shops have and continue to be "safe havens" for vaccine education and distribution. What are other "safe havens" in communities that could be used for similar outreach?

- Some of the trusted messengers in the film expressed their own hesitations, although they all eventually chose to be vaccinated. How do you relate to their concerns? Do you think your decision-making influences or improves your communication with others?
- What techniques did you observe in the film that providers used to counsel patients who were uncertain or hesitant about getting the COVID-19 vaccine? Were they successful? What are some strengths or weaknesses you observed?

Other questions

- What is your knowledge of structural racism within the medical field as it relates to the historical trauma endured by Black people in the United States? How might this inform concerns about vaccine safety within the Black community? How do you approach this with patients and clients?
- How do you approach misinformation in clinical encounters, on social media and in the community?