Updates on COVID-19 Health Inequities and Community Vaccination Strategies in New York City



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Focus on Pride: Serving LGBTQ+ Patients During COVID-19



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NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Provider Webinar June 18, 2021

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Updates on COVID-19 Health Inequities and Community Vaccination Strategies in New York City

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Inequities in Experiences of the COVID-19 Pandemic, New York City

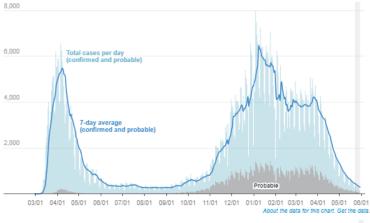


- COVID-19 has caused more than 100,000 hospitalizations and 30,000 deaths in NYC to date
- Black and Latino people have experienced the highest rates of illness, hospitalization, and death, with several neighborhoods harder hit than others
- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted numerous injustices for historically marginalized groups in the US, including Black, Indigenous and people of color and lower-income New Yorkers^{1,2}

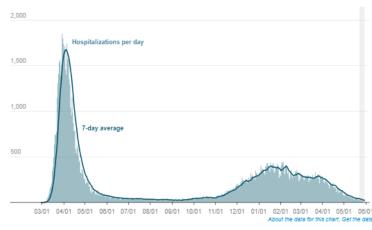
^{2.} Dobosh K, Tiberio J, Dongchung TY, et al. Inequities in New Yorkers' Experiences of the COVID-19 Pandemic. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Epi Data Brief (123); May 2021.



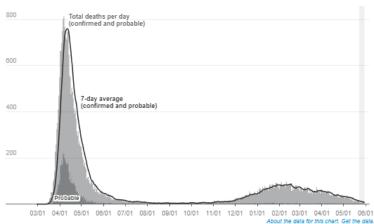
^{1.} Bailey ZD, Krieger N, Agénor M, Graves J, Linos N, Bassett MT. Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions. Lancet. 2017; 389:1453-1463.



953,076 Cases



109,248 Hospitalizations



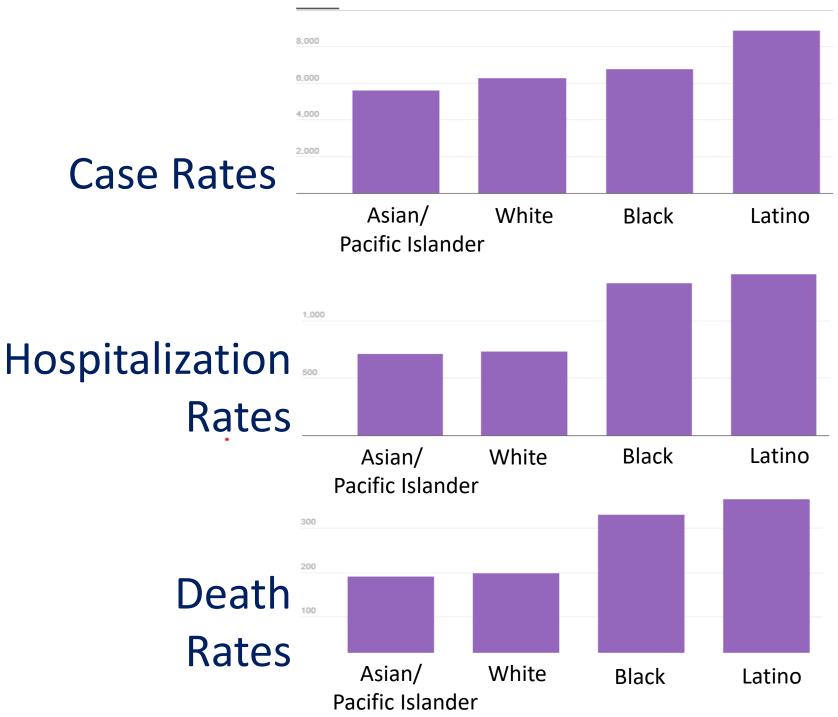
33,370 Deaths

New York City COVID-19 Totals January 2020 – June 2021

New York City COVID-19 Rates* January 2020 – **June 2021**



Case Rates



*Rates per 100,000 people (age-adjusted)

COVID-19 Data (as of June 17, 2021)

Inequities in Experiences of the COVID-19 Pandemic, New York City



 The disproportionate impact on people of color is a result of historic and persistent structural and institutional racism

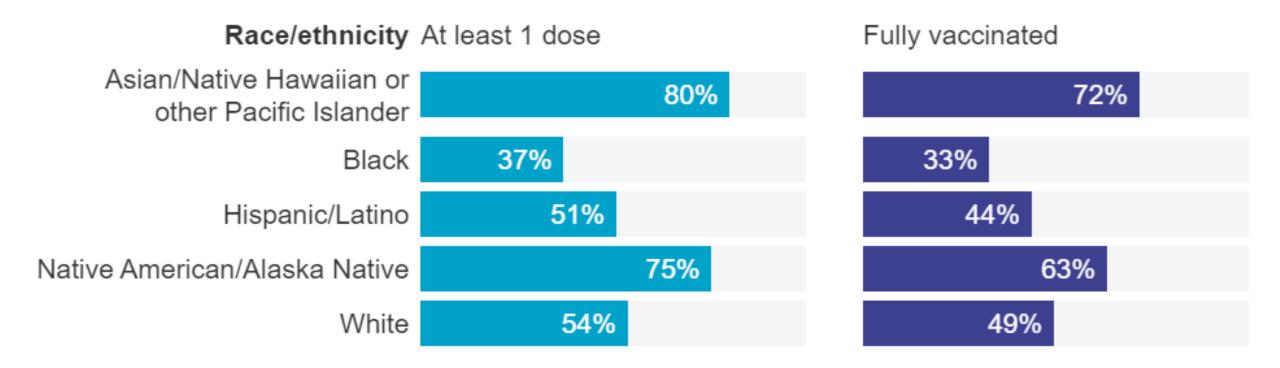
Examples include:

- Policies and discriminatory practices that prevent communities of color from accessing vital resources (such as health care, housing and food)
- Limited opportunities (such as employment and education), and negative effects on overall health and well-being
- Such policies and practices have led to inequitable health, social, and economic outcomes in the U.S., including NYC¹

1. Bailey ZD, Krieger N, Agénor M, Graves J, Linos N, Bassett MT. Structural racism and health inequities in the USA: evidence and interventions. Lancet. 2017; 389:1453-1463.

Percent of Adult COVID-19 Vaccinations by Demographic Group in NYC

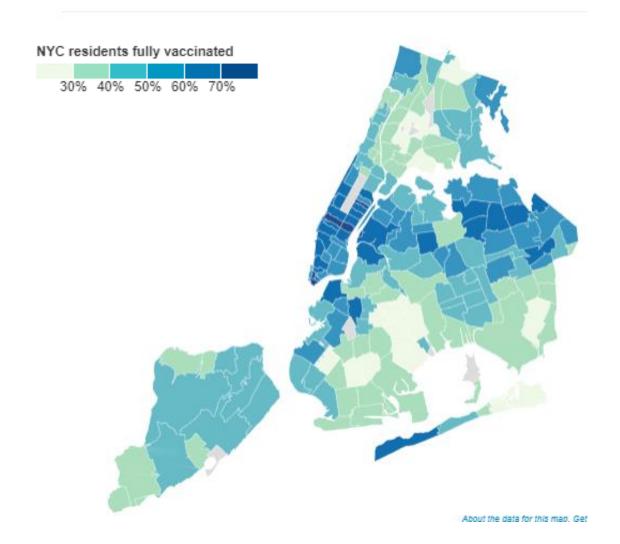






COVID-19 Vaccination Rates by Zip Code in NYC

Fully Vaccinated, All Ages



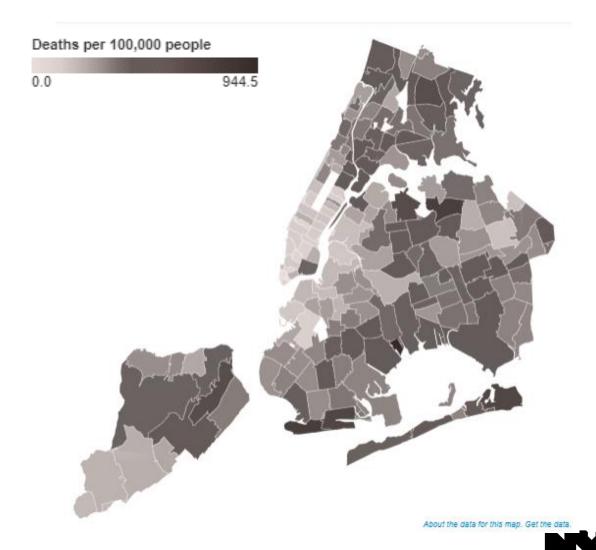


COVID-19 Vaccination Rates by Zip Code in NYC

Fully Vaccinated, All Ages

NYC residents fully vaccinated

COVID-19 Death Rates by Zip Code in NYC

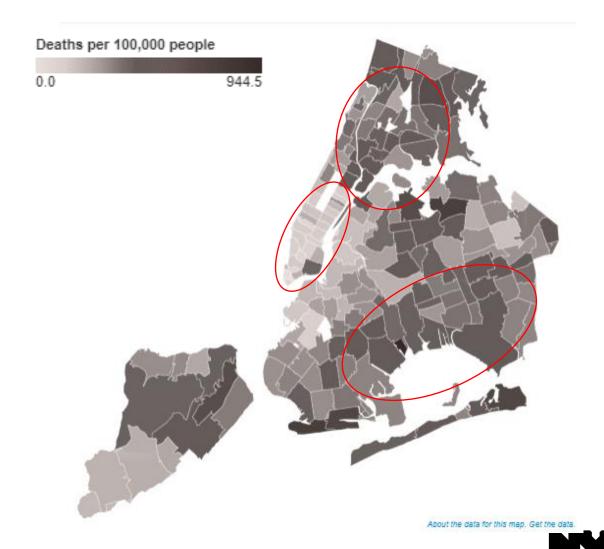


COVID-19 Vaccination Rates by Zip Code in NYC

Fully Vaccinated, All Ages

NYC residents fully vaccinated

COVID-19 Death Rates by Zip Code in NYC



COVID-19 Vaccination Intentions, Uptake, Motivators, and Barriers New York City, HOP Survey Results

- NYC Health Opinion Polls (HOP) were conducted in multiple languages to ask New Yorkers about COVID-19 vaccination intentions, uptake, motivators, and barriers
- Among those already vaccinated, reasons for getting vaccinated included:
 - Prevent illness among others in community or household
 - End the pandemic
- Among those unsure or who did not intend to get a COVID-19 vaccine, reasons included:
 - Wanting to learn more about the vaccine
 - Concerns that COVID-19 vaccines developed too quickly without enough information about safety and effectiveness



COVID-19 Vaccination Intentions, Uptake, Motivators, and Barriers Conversations with NYC Community-Based Organizations

- Partners report New Yorkers express mistrust of the Health Department, CDC, and medical institutions
- Misinformation about the vaccine is circulating
 - Examples include a meme of people missing limbs, social media posts with the myth that vaccine will change a person's DNA or lead to infertility
- Some New Yorkers have concern about vaccine safety, including fear of side effects or an allergic reaction and concerns about the safety of the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen Vaccine
- Some New Yorkers lack an understanding of how the vaccine works and terminology associated with immunity



COVID-19 Vaccination Intentions, Uptake, Motivators, and Barriers The Rockefeller Foundation Vaccine Confidence Message Brief

- Focus groups conducted in the US by the Rockefeller Foundation found
 - Black and Latino respondents have many of the same top concerns as White respondents
 - The vaccine was created too quickly
 - It may have significant side effects
- A concern more significant among communities of color is access:
 - They need to see, hear and believe that they'll be able to access vaccines through a place and provider they trust



Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccines



- The NYC Health Department places equity at the foundation of all aspects of its COVID-19 response, including vaccine access
- We must address mistrust of the medical community and government due to historical and continued mistreatment of people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other groups, especially as New Yorkers face the decision of whether to get vaccinated
- We are committed to gaining community trust, combatting misinformation, and ensuring free and easy access to COVID-19 vaccines for all New Yorkers
- Use a framework to prioritize efforts, particularly in the 33 neighborhoods identified by The Taskforce on Racial Inclusion & Equity (TRIE) as being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and with significant racial and economic disparities in health outcomes



Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccines



Steps NYC and the Health Department are taking:

- Opening vaccine sites and bringing vaccines to communities most impacted by COVID-19, including pop-up sites, mobile units and events
- Making sure New Yorkers have the information they need in the language they speak to make clear and informed decisions about the vaccines
- Working closely with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), clinical partners, faith-based organizations, and community leaders
- Listening and responding to community concerns and input
- Monitoring data and community feedback to identify needs and gaps in access



Make Vaccine Sites Available and Accessible



- NYC Vaccine Hubs
- Pharmacies
- State/FEMA sites

To find a vaccination site nearby use the City's Vaccine Finder

(not accessible with Internet Explorer)





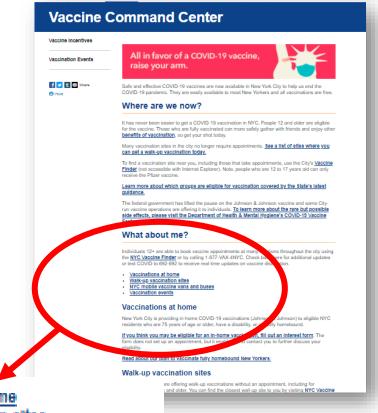
Bring Vaccines to People/Places



- Vaccines at home
- Walk-up vaccination sites
- NYC mobile vaccine vans and buses
- Vaccination events

For more information visit the City's

Vaccine Commander Center



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Bring Vaccines to People/Places and People to Vaccines

Homebound Vaccination Program



- Delivering in-home vaccination to New Yorkers who are:
 - Homebound, 75 and older, disabled, NYCHA resident, employee or retiree of NYC, or referred by their union, vaccination team member or a City partner
 - Providers or the patient can fill out form at nyc.gov/homebound or call the NYC Vaccine Hotline at 877-VAX4NYC (877-829-4692)
 - The City schedules the home visit appointment and can also make appointments for any homecare worker or other eligible person in the household
 - Health care providers already serving homebound patients can arrange to give in-home vaccination for their existing patients
 - Provided vaccine allocation for both homebound patients and their eligible health aides or caregivers



Bring Vaccines to People/Places and People to Vaccines

Free Transportation



- Free transportation for residents ages 65+ and individuals with disabilities (ages 16-64) to and from vaccination sites
 - Eligible passengers can request to be picked up anywhere in the five boroughs and taken to any vaccination site located within the City
 - Request free transportation by calling 855-491-2667



Bring Vaccines to People/Places Walk-Up Sites



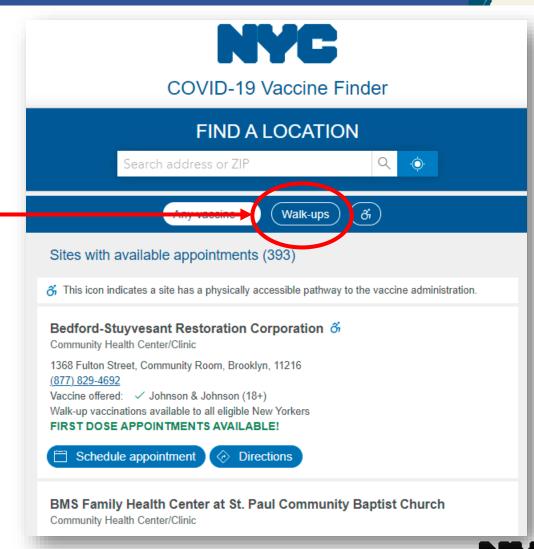
 Many vaccination sites in the city no longer require appointments

To find a walk-up ——vaccination site nearby use the City's

Vaccine Finder

(not accessible with Internet Explorer)

https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/



Bring Vaccines to People/Places

NYC Mobile & Pop-Up Vaccine Sites



- Temporary vaccination sites across the City to better meet New Yorkers where they live, work, go to school, and play
 - Mobile and pop-up sites
- Mobile language units now available with staff who speak different languages including Spanish, Mandarin, Haitian Creole, Russian, French and Yiddish
- Fully staffed with intake personnel and nurses to safely and conveniently administer COVID-19 vaccines and observe patients
- Appointment not required but can be made in advance at many of these sites online or by calling 877-VAX-4NYC







To find mobile and pop-up sites by borough visit the City's Vaccine Commander Center



Vaccine Command Center

All in favor of a COVID-19 vaccine, raise your arm.



Safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are now available in New York City to help us end the COVID-19 pandemic. They are easily available to most New Yorkers and all vaccinations are free.

Where are we now?

It has never been easier to get a COVID-19 vaccination in NYC. People 12 and older are eligible for the vaccine. Those who are fully vaccinated can more safely gather with friends and enjoy other <u>benefits of vaccination</u>, so get your shot today.

Many vaccination sites in the city no longer require appointments. See a list of sites where you can get a walk-up vaccination today.

To find a vaccination site near you, including those that take appointments, use the City's <u>Vaccine Finder</u> (not accessible with Internet Explorer). Note, people who are 12 to 17 years old can only receive the Pfizer vaccine.

<u>Learn more about which groups are eligible for vaccination covered by the State's latest guidance.</u>

The federal government has lifted the pause on the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and some Cityrun vaccine operations are offering it to individuals. <u>To learn more about the rare but possible</u> <u>side effects, please visit the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene's COVID-19 Vaccine</u> <u>Facts page</u>.

What about me?

Individuals 12+ are able to book vaccine appointments at many locations throughout the city using the MYC Vaccine Finder or by calling 1-877-VAX-4NYC. Check back here for additional updates or text COVID to 692-692 to receive real-time updates on vaccine distribution.

- Vaccinations at home
- Walk-up vaccination sites
- NYC mobile vaccine vans and buses



Bring Vaccines to People/Places

Vaccine Events



Upcoming Event Themes

- Juneteenth 6/19
- Pride Month
- Gun Violence Awareness Month
- Make Music New York 6/21
- Father's Day 6/20
- Senior Vax Van
- July 4th

To learn about current vaccine events, visit the City's Vaccine Events Page

COVID-19 Vaccination Events



Youth Vax Week

Adolescents 12 to 17 years old are now eligible to get vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine! Join us this week at one of the events below to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines and get vaccinated. The safest way to protect yourself, your family and your community against COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.



Support Providers Public Health Detailing Teams



- Detailing teams visit providers and staff in priority neighborhoods
 - Promote communication best practices and opportunities to increase access and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines
 - One-on-one education
 - Review key recommendations
 - Share provider resources and patient education materials
 - Overcome barriers and objections to patient vaccination

Collect information

- Perception of patient barriers to COVID-19 vaccination
- Provider/practice barriers to offering COVID-19 vaccinations on site
- Wishlist for tools and resources to assist in building vaccine confidence among patients
- Experience with Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) enrollment and if there is a need for technical assistance to facilitate enrollment



Building Confidence



- Conducting:
 - Town Halls
 - Community Conversations
 - Train the Trainer sessions
 - On-the-ground canvassing, robocalls, mailers, texts
 - Flyers, palm cards, factsheets, posters in 13+ languages
 - Videos: Doctors of the NYC Department of Health Public Service Announcement
- Identifying barriers to vaccine uptake or confidence in specific populations
- Addressing COVID-19 vaccine misinformation
- Working to support vaccine confidence among healthcare personnel
- Engaging community partners and trusted messengers



Building Confidence



Providers are trusted messengers

- Among New Yorkers who were unsure or who did not intend to get vaccinated, 35% reported they would like to hear from their doctor or pharmacist to feel comfortable receiving the vaccine¹
- Build trust with patients and speak to the benefits of vaccination
- Explain that side effects are to be expected
- Counter myths and misinformation

Provider resources

- Vaccine Facts Video Campaign to address key drivers of vaccine hesitancy and bust myths: https://youtu.be/q0GDExe-FVY
- Watch: <u>The Conversation: Between Us,</u> <u>About Us</u>: Black and Latino/a health care professionals answer questions about the COVID-19 vaccines
- Provider Vaccine Communications pages <u>www.nyc.gov/vaccinetalks</u>



Focus on Pride: Serving LGBTQ+ Patients During COVID-19

Julian Watkins, MD

Senior Clinical Advisor

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

LGBTQ+ and COVID-19: A Quiet Inequity?



- LGBTQ+ people as a group may be at higher at risk of severe COVID-19 and of pandemic-related challenges to well-being
 - In a CDC 2017-2019 national survey, people who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual were more like to have health conditions that would put them at increased risk of severe COVID-19 (e.g., asthma, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, stroke, current smoking)¹
 - A Kaiser national poll from December 2020 and January 2021 found that LGBTQ+ people were more likely to have experienced job loss and mental health challenges related to COVID-19²
- Reliable data is lacking on rates of COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccination among LGBTQ+ people

^{2.} Kirzinger A, Dawson L, Kates J. The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBT People. Kaiser Family Foundation. https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-lgbt-people/. Published April 13, 2021.



^{1.} Heslin KC, Hall JE. Sexual Orientation Disparities in Risk Factors for Adverse COVID-19—Related Outcomes, by Race/Ethnicity — Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, United States, 2017–2019. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:149–154.

LGBTQ+ Access to Care

Ensuring LGBTQ+ Access to Care



- Full access to comprehensive medical care can help prevent COVID-19-related health issues through testing, treatment and vaccination
- People need a provider they trust
 - Many LGBTQ+ people avoid care or do not disclose their sexuality to providers
 - Among men who have sex with men, Black men are less likely to disclose their sexual identity¹ and their access to care may be undermined by experiences of discrimination² and mistrust of medical institutions³

- 1. Bernstein KT, et al. Same-sex attraction disclosure to health care providers among New York City men who have sex with men: implications for HIV testing approaches. Arch Intern Med. 2008;168(13):1458-1464.
- 2. Maksut JL, et al. Health care discrimination, sex behavior disclosure, and awareness of pre-exposure prophylaxis among Black men who have sex with men. <u>Stigma Health</u>. 2018;3(4):330-337.
- 3. Eaton LA, et al. The role of stigma and medical mistrust in the routine health care engagement of Black men who have sex with men. Am J Public Health. 2015;105(2):e75-e82.

Promote LGBTQ+ Patient Trust and Comfort



- Establish a clinical approach that welcomes LGBTQ+ people
 - Avoid any appearance of judgment or bias
 - **Avoid** questions that imply a right answer: e.g., Ask sexually active patients: "What are the genders of your sex partners?" instead of asking "Do you have a husband?"
 - Be mindful of non-verbal reactions to what a patient shares
 - Ask patients about their goals for their health and wellness
 - Allow for dialogue
 - Recognize that patients are experts in their own lives
 - Display images that celebrate LGBTQ+ health and LGBTQ+ pride
 - Post the <u>LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights</u> and a confidentiality statement
 - Train clinical and frontline staff on LGBTQ+ health (T-TAP)



Effectively Serve Transgender and Gender Non-binary People¹



- Accurately document, and respect, each patient's gender
 - **Document and update** in patient's electronic medical record:
 - Name and pronouns they use
 - Their gender identity and sex assigned at birth
 - Instruct all staff to address each patient by their name and pronouns
- Avoid questions about patients' bodies or transgender experience that are motivated more by curiosity than relevance to clinical care
 - Explain how you will use the information you collect
 - Mirror patients' language when speaking about their bodies
- Provide access to gender-affirming hormones
- Provide integrated physical and mental health care



LGBTQ+ Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

NYC Efforts to Increase LGBTQ+ Access to COVID-19 Vaccines



- Ensure City-run vaccine sites are welcoming to LGBTQ+ people
- Place pop-up vaccine sites at Pride events







Providers Can Promote Access to COVID-19 Vaccines



- No missed opportunity: A provider's recommendation to get vaccinated is the strongest predictor that someone will get a vaccine
- Inform people with <u>health conditions</u> including HIV, high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, heart disease, cancer that vaccines are safe for them
 - People with these conditions may be more likely to get very sick if they get COVID-19 and can particularly benefit from vaccination
- Share the many benefits of vaccination: Two weeks after being fully vaccinated, people can have close contact with others (including sex!) with little risk of getting sick with COVID-19
- Allow people whose ID does not match their preferred name to receive care without imposing barriers (including COVID-19 vaccines)



Address Patients' Concerns About Vaccines



- Ask if they have any questions about COVID-19 vaccines
- Acknowledge any concerns or past negative experiences they bring up
 - Including medical mistrust or experiences of abuse
- Share guidance that may be relevant to LGBTQ+ patients
 - **HIV:** Patients with HIV or other immunocompromising conditions can safely receive COVID-19 vaccines^{1,2}
 - Severely immunocompromised people (e.g., with low CD4 counts) should avoid possible COVID-19 infection even after vaccination
 - Hormones: Patients taking gender-affirming hormones can safely get a vaccine
 - Experts do not believe hormones will interact with the vaccines
 - Other COVID-19 precautions: Encourage people who are not ready to get a
 vaccine to wear masks and avoid close contact with others



Restoring Non-COVID-19 Health Care

A Return to Routine Care



- Address potential gaps and delays in care
 - STI screening fell sharply during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic¹
 - High rates of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health conditions reported in various national populations²
- Encourage patients to get routine care as COVID-19 transmission declines, including by reaching out to patients
- Offer to patients who experienced delays in routine care:
 - Mental health screening
 - HIV and other STI testing, especially if currently sexually active
 - Counseling on HIV prevention and unintended pregnancy
 - Screening for other diseases and chronic conditions
- **Refer LGBTQ+ patients** to affirming providers listed in the <u>NYC Health Map</u>, as appropriate



Additional COVID-19 Resources



COVID-19 Vaccines

- NYC Health Department COVID-19 Vaccine:
 - Providers:
 - General vaccine information: nyc.gov/health/covidvaccineprovider
 - Vaccine communication resources: nyc.gov/VaccineTalks
 - Provider hotline to schedule vaccine appointments: 877-VAX-4NYC (877-8229-4692); press 2 at second prompt
 - Public: nyc.gov/covidvaccine
- Citywide Immunization Registry Reporting Assistance
 - https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/reporting-and-services/cir-how-to-report.page#electronic
- Vaccine Provider Assistance: nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov

General COVID-19 Resources

- Provider page: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-providers.page
- Data page: nyc.gov/coviddata
- Dear Colleague COVID-19 newsletters (sign up for City Health Information subscription at: nyc.gov/health/register)
- NYC Health Alert Network (sign up at https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/resources/health-alert-network.page)
- Provider Access Line: 866-692-3641



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