

Workshop: Enhancing conversations about the COVID-19 vaccines with culturally and linguistically diverse communities in NSW

Background: There are a range of community members that may be formally asked to contribute to the COVID-19 vaccine promotion efforts, may be approached by community members as a trusted source of information, or may take the initiative themselves to talk to their community members about the COVID-19 vaccine. These people (referred to as 'community ambassadors') often come from the communities they are servicing, speak the relevant languages(s) and are in trusted positions to be important ambassadors of Australia's National COVID-19 Immunisation Program.

The successful involvement of community ambassadors to promote vaccination is well documented in low-income countries to promote polio, HPV, and uptake of other vaccines. Community ambassadors can create demand, increase community support, and reach vulnerable groups. To maximise the impact of these community ambassadors, this training session aims to support their skills and confidence to have meaningful conversations and to also address any misinformation circulating in the community.

Target participants: The workshop specifically targets community and faith-based leaders, staff of key multicultural organisations, case workers and other professionals providing services to members of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in New South Wales.

It is acknowledged that the participants doing this training are not medical experts and so the case studies will feature relevant examples of when they may need to draw on their understanding. Throughout the training, participants will be reminded that their role is as a community ambassador and that they can nudge their community towards information available in-language, as well as to remind the community to ask questions to their General Practitioner.

Outline and learning objectives:

The training will cover the following areas

- Strategies to build vaccine confidence in your community and organisation
- Discussing COVID-19 vaccines with people who have questions
- Responding to vaccine misinformation
- Introduce the COVID-19 Vaccine Glossary and other relevant tools and resources.

The workshop material will focus on building skills to communicate effectively about COVID-19 and the vaccine program. A large part of this training will also focus on how to address misinformation. We will draw on developed resources on communication from the Behavioural Insights Summer School, developed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the University of Erfurt, and resources from the Collaboration on Social Science and Immunisation. During the workshop, we will review case scenarios and will provide opportunities for participants to practice the communication approaches and to ask questions.

Time: 2 hour workshop which can be delivered virtually or face to face (if feasible)

Workshop moderator: Associate Professor Holly Seale is a Social Scientist at the School of Population Health, UNSW Sydney and Deputy Chair of the Collaboration on Social Science and Immunisation. Holly's research focuses on promoting acceptance and uptake of immunisation while applying a "whole-of-life" lens. She has spent considerable time examining the issues impacting on the equitable access of vaccines for refugees and migrants in Australia.