

## Vaccinations Elevator Speech

### *Suggested Talking Points*

Introduce yourself: Hi, my name is (insert name) and I am currently a (insert position) at (insert workplace or school) in (insert city, state).

#### **1. Why are vaccination rates decreasing?**

- a. The anti-vaccination movement originally gained significant support due to claims of a link to autism and has continued to grow based on beliefs of parental and religious rights.<sup>1</sup> One study estimated that more than half of recent measles cases were in unvaccinated patients. Vaccinations have become a contentious political point, rather than a public health effort aimed at improving the health of all communities.

#### **2. What can pharmacists do to help?**

- a. Research has identified the most effective way to increase vaccination rates is to educate patients and parents. By taking time to listen to patients about their concerns and discuss potential benefits of preventive strategies, pharmacists can leverage shared decision making to promote patient-centered care.
- b. Pharmacists can help clarify misconceptions and educate patients on the benefits of vaccinations along with the potential downsides of choosing not to get a vaccine, including increased community transmissions and untoward impacts of acquired illness. Pharmacists are well positioned to have these discussions, as the most accessible health care provider, plus they can improve uptake of these preventive strategies by offering administration of many vaccinations.
- c. After legislation was passed to allow pharmacists to administer the flu vaccine, flu vaccination rates increased by 8% in ten years.<sup>2</sup>

#### **3. What can be done to improve vaccination rates?**

- a. Support funding for federal, state, and local departments and programs, such as the National Institute of Health, Department of HHS, and the CDC, that focus on improving patient education along with accessibility and distribution of vaccines.
- b. Support legislation that expands pharmacists' ability to screen patients and administer essential vaccines – many states already have legislation allowing this given pharmacist training and expertise related to use and administration of vaccines.
- c. Support the use of centralized databases to improve transparency of vaccine records and promote continuity of care among healthcare providers, by letting clinicians know which vaccines may be needed for specific patients.

I appreciate you taking the time to speak with me today. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have (exchange contact information).

#### **Remember:**

- Stick to plain language that doesn't require healthcare or pharmacy background.
- Keep it short (60-90 seconds).
- Answer any questions and provide feedback/additional info as needed.
- Always follow up with a thank you.

*Updated April 2024*

## References

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>
2. <https://www.uspharmacist.com/article/pharmacist-immunization-boosting-flu-vaccinations>
3. [Reversing the Decline in Routine Childhood Immunization Rates Is Good Health, Equity, and Economic Policy - Center for American Progress](#)
4. [Coverage with Selected Vaccines and Exemption from School Vaccine Requirements Among Children in Kindergarten — United States, 2022–23 School Year | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](#)
5. [Childhood Vaccine Exemption Rates at an All-Time High, CDC Says \(healthline.com\)](#)
6. [Protective vaccination rates falling out of reach in US; exemptions hit record | Ars Technica](#)
7. [Pandemic drives largest drop in childhood vaccinations in 30 years \(nature.com\)](#)

For additional resources focused on building vaccine confidence, visit the [ASHP Vaccine Confidence Toolkit](#)

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