Trusted voices – who, why and how to communicate about COVID-19 vaccines

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Communicating during crises, why trusted voices are more important than ever

What we know now about COVID-19 vaccine

A highly varied landscape is emerging:

- Attitudes are dynamic and evolving
- Substantial variation across demographics at a sub-national level
- Influences are layered, complex, and context-specific: ethnicity, geography, education, socio-economic, employment
- Hesitancy is a hurdle (information alone doesn't address it), but is decreasing as norms are established
- Trust in government translates to trust in vaccines, and a lack of transparency feeds mistrust
- Targeted interventions emerge when focusing on specific sub-national groups

➢ **… and it matters for all vaccines**

L. Menning, IVB, WHO

What we know now about TRUST

- Trust can’t be easily gained during an emergency
- People turn to sources they’ve trusted in the past
- The closer a threat comes to individual world’s the closer/localized sources will be trusted
- Consistency and provision of update information important

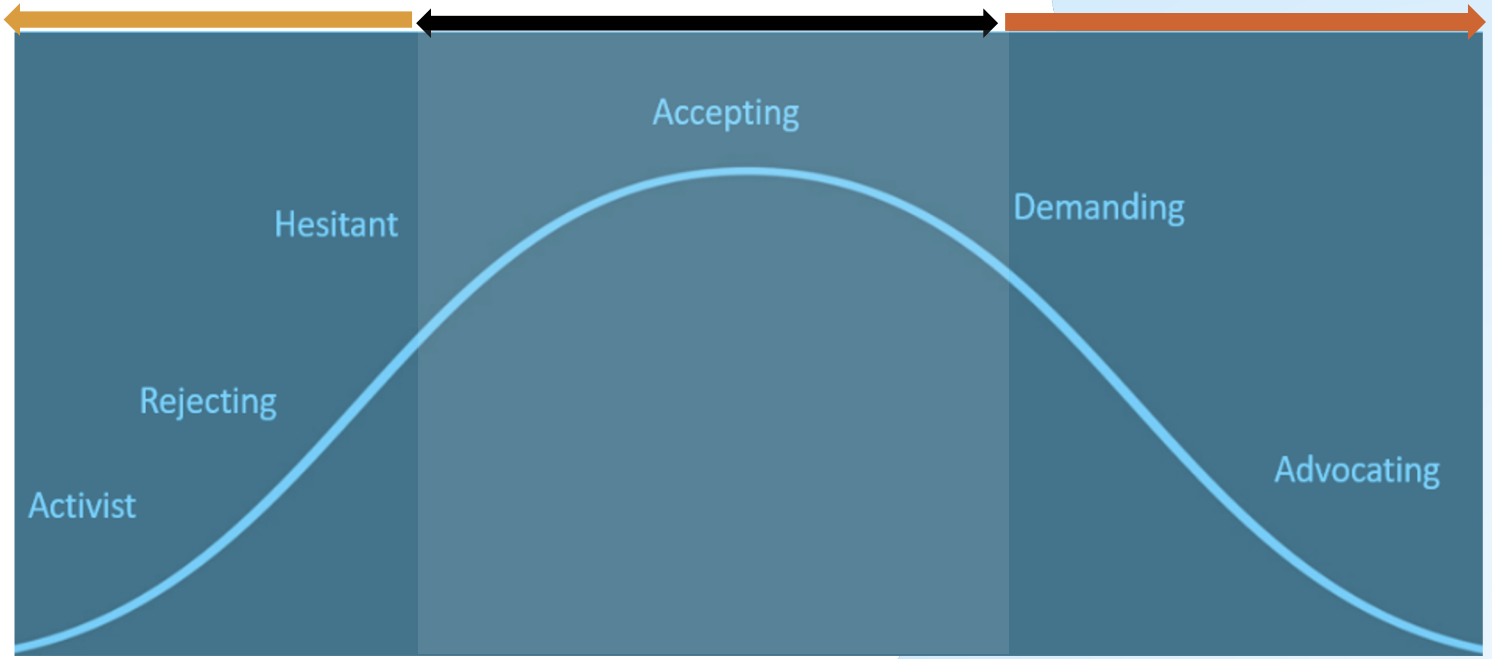
Understanding Demand and Hesitancy

Vaccine Hesitancy

delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccine services

Immunization Demand

the actions of individuals & communities to seek, support, and/or advocate for vaccines and immunization services



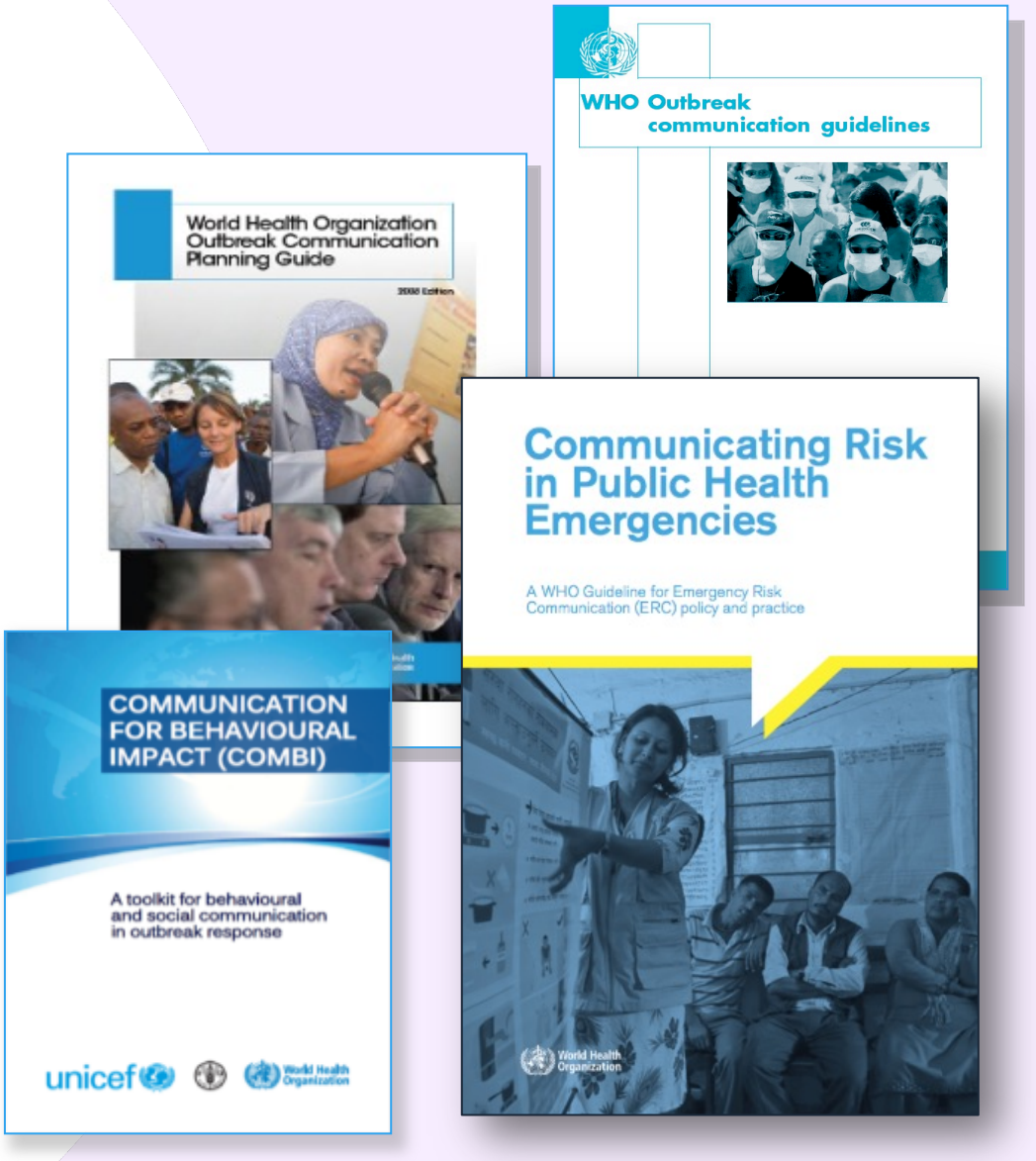
Spectrum of intentions related to COVID-19 vaccines*

*GACVS vaccine safety communications guide for COVID-19 vaccines (chapter 9)

"The overriding goal for outbreak communications is to communicate with the public in ways that build, maintain or restore

Trust."

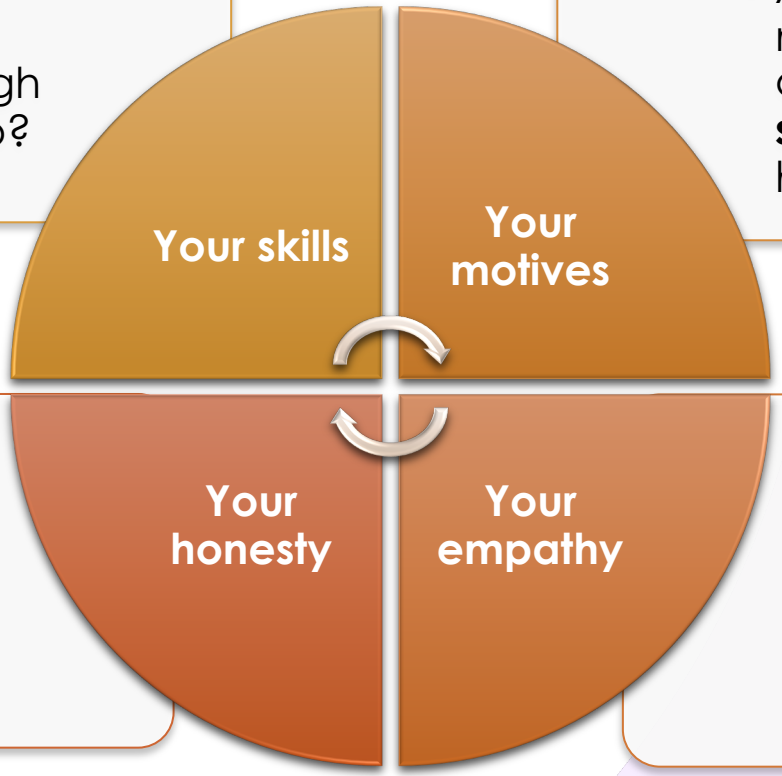
WHO Outbreak Communication Guidelines, 2005



Trust is the public perception of

- Are the risk managers **skilled** enough to do the job?

- Are the risk managers acting to **safeguard** my health?



- Are the risk managers telling all the **truth**?

- Do the risk managers **understand** me?

YES to all these questions?

TRUST

Managing misinformation = gaining trust

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The COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Handbook - https://hackmd.io/@scibehC19vax/home
Lewandowsky, S., Cook, J., Schmid, P., Holford, D. L., Finn, A., Leask, J., Thomson, A., Lombardi, D., Al-Rawi, A. K., Amazeen, M. A., Anderson, E. C., Armaos, K. D., Betsch, C., Bruns, H. H. B., Ecker, U. K. H., Gavaruzzi, T., Hahn, U., Herzog, S., Juanchich, M., Kendeou, P., Newman, E. J., Pennycook, G., Rapp, D. N., Sah, S., Sinatra, G. M., Tapper, K., Vraga, E. K (2021). The COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Handbook. A practical guide for improving vaccine communication and fighting misinformation.

Misinformation drains resources (human and financial) away from other emergency risk communication objectives

When people are misinformed they may make decisions that are not in the best interest of themselves/families/ communities

Trusted channels expand beyond social media and management of misinformation can inform efforts across a range of channels and venues, including social media

Managing misinformation = gaining trust

Misinformation*
Accidental falsehoods. Wrong or misleading information with the power to dilute, distract, distort.

Disinformation*
Deliberate, engineered falsehoods circulated with malicious intent or for the purpose of serving a personal, political or economic agenda.

Rumor*
Unverified information; stories/reports that spread rapidly through a group or population – can be *true or false*

How can you counter misinformation at the interpersonal level?

Use facts to debunk myths and rumors

Point to trusted people/resources that support vaccination

'Social Inoculation'**

1. Preparing people by telling them about misinformation they are likely to encounter before they see it via usual community and social media channels.
2. It is theorized that this may make them less likely to believe or share it.
3. This concept is promising for making people resistant to strong, future persuasive attacks.

*Vaccine Misinformation Management Field Guild: Guidance for addressing a global infodemic and fostering demand for immunization. https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/vaccine-misinformation-management-field-guide

**Compton, J., Jackson, B., & Dimmock, J. A. (2016). Persuading Others to Avoid Persuasion: Inoculation Theory and Resistant Health Attitudes. *Frontiers in psychology*, *7*, 122. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00122

The art of refuting a mistruth… or not refuting

1. Fact
Lead with the truth, state the facts clearly. Do not try to refute the misinformation, just state what is true.

2. Warning
An explicit warning that misinformation is coming, which may contain a weakened version of the misinformation. Only repeat the misinformation once.

3. Fallacy
Explain why the misinformation is wrong and, as with prebunking, explain the specific misleading tactics being employed, or highlight the hidden motives of the authors of the disinformation.

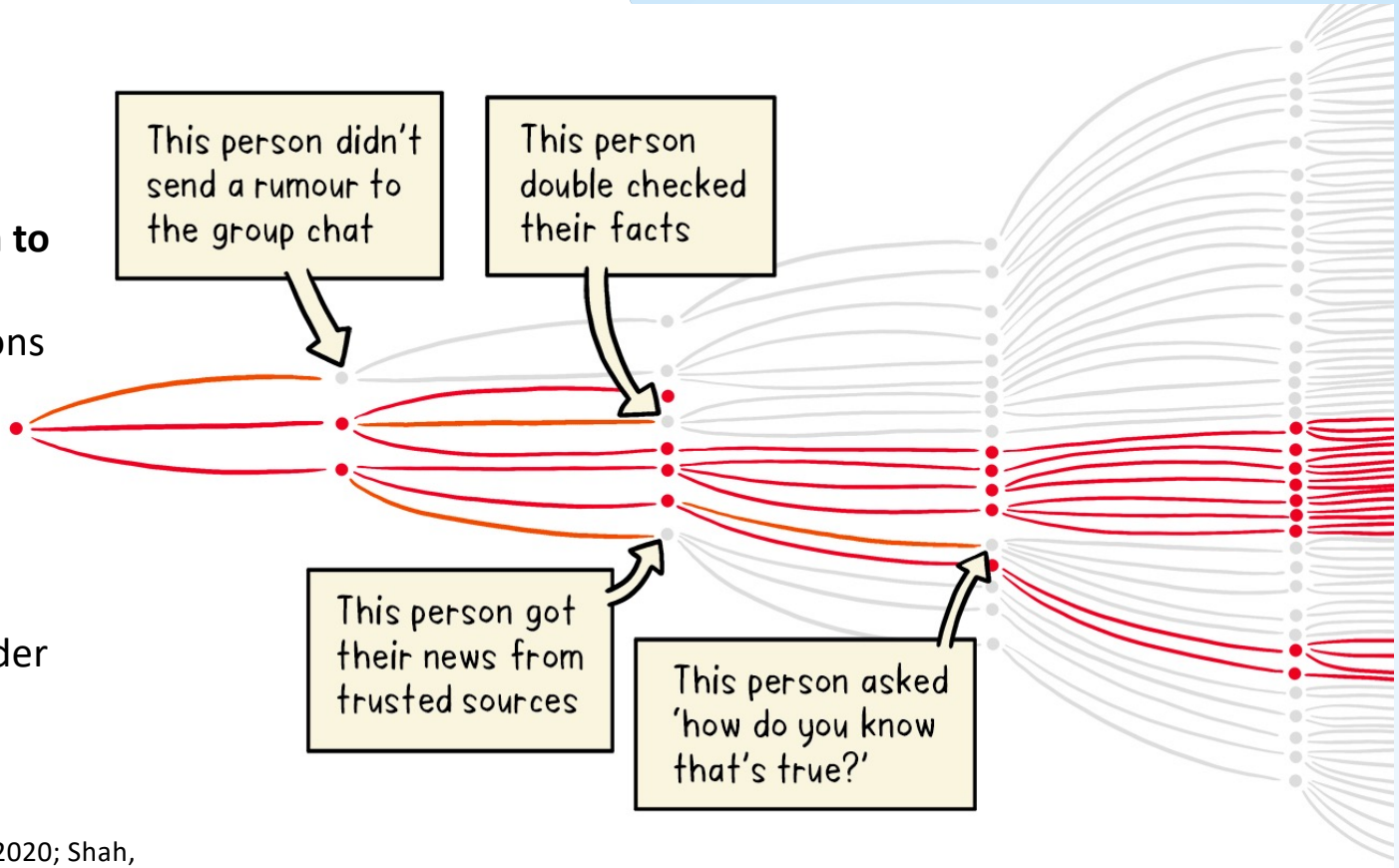
4. Fact
Repeat the truth. This is crucial because the alternative correct information fills the mental 'gap' generated by the correction. Make the facts 'stickier' than the misinformation (see **Appendix 3** for tips).

*Vaccine Misinformation Management Field Guild: Guidance for addressing a global infodemic and fostering demand for immunization. https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/vaccine-misinformation-management-field-guide

The truth may be irrelevant

People spread bad information to

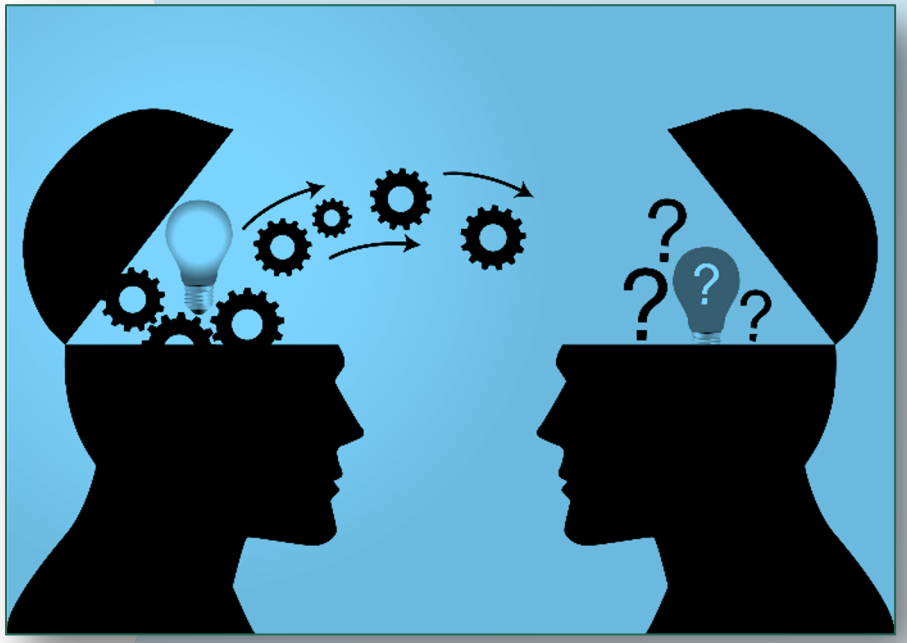
- Express feelings
- Find out other people's opinions
- Coping with uncertainty
- Building relationships
- Self enhancement
- Social cohesion
- Markers of mutuality
- Mobilizing against political order
- For fun



Chadwick & Vaccari, 2019; Duffey et al., 2020; Shah, K., 2020; Wasserman et al, 2019; 2020

When the conversation starts without TRUST - Communicating with communities with opposing world views

- Direct refutation of misinformation linked to world views can backfire, specifically within the communities that hold ideologies that oppose COVID-19 science (Berenski, 2017).
- Refutation tactics, commonly used in scientific communication practice, can be perceived by those groups as challenges to individual and community autonomy and world-views (Lewandowsky, 2012).
- These challenges can reinforce existing misperceptions (Berenski, 2017; Lewandowsky, 2012; Nyhan & Reifler, 2010; Pickel 1995, Wolf & Montgomery, 1997).



Tips for building TRUST

- Accept and communicate **uncertainty** – explain what is known and unknown.
- **Admit when you don't know the answer** to a question. If possible, find out the answer and provide the information later.
- Share information in a **timely and proactive** way.
- Be **transparent about possible risks** – e.g., prepare people for possible side effects Show empathy, solidarity and understanding.
- **Respect and acknowledge** diversity of opinion.
- Use **clear and simple language** and avoid jargon.
- **Avoid over-reassuring** or making promises. It is important to set realistic expectations.

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Questions?

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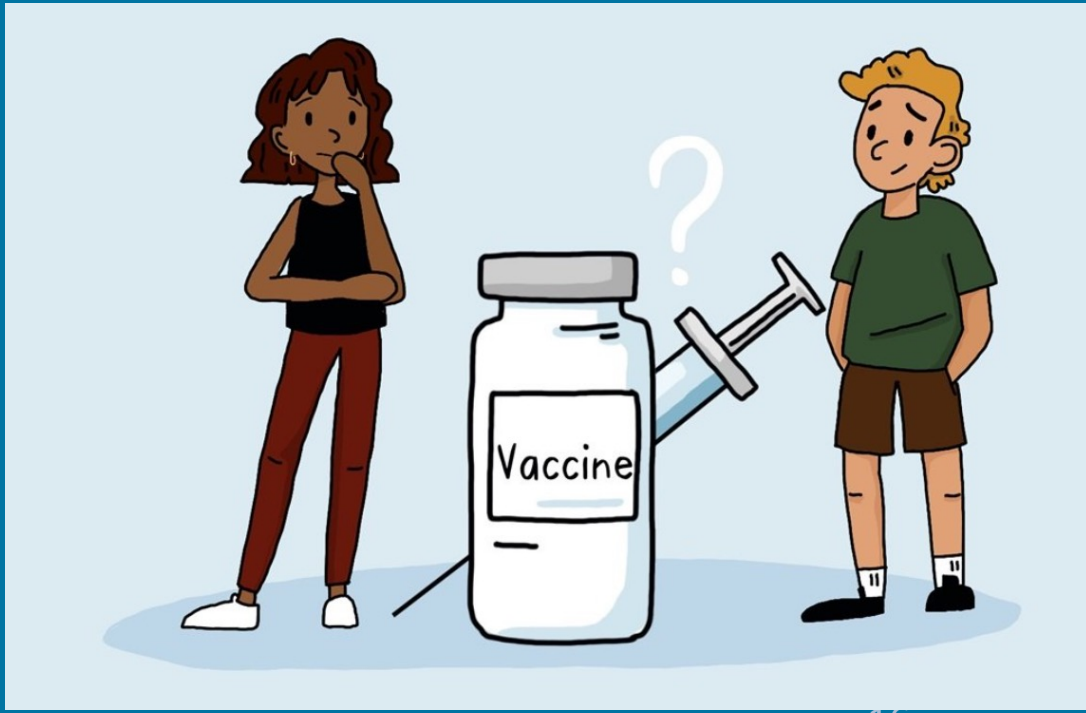
How to have conversations about COVID-19 vaccines



Source: https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/how-to-talk-about-vaccines

1.

Listen with empathy

And acknowledge how they're feeling.

2.

Ask open-ended questions

To help you understand their concerns

3.

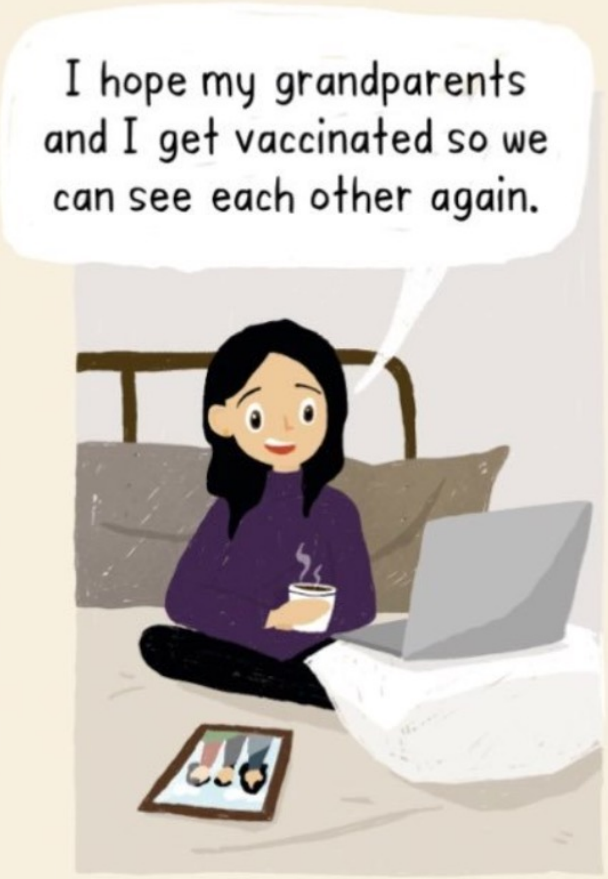
Share trusted information

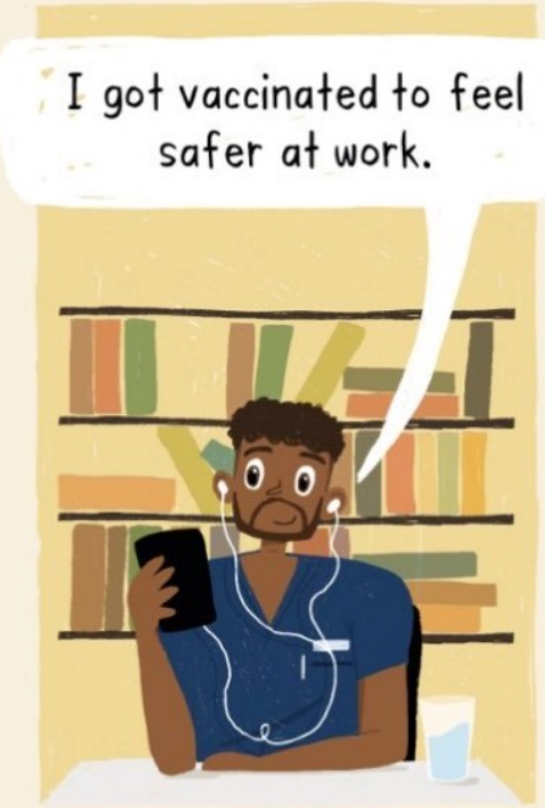
Visit the WHO website or chat to your doctor or nurse to find answers to common questions

4.

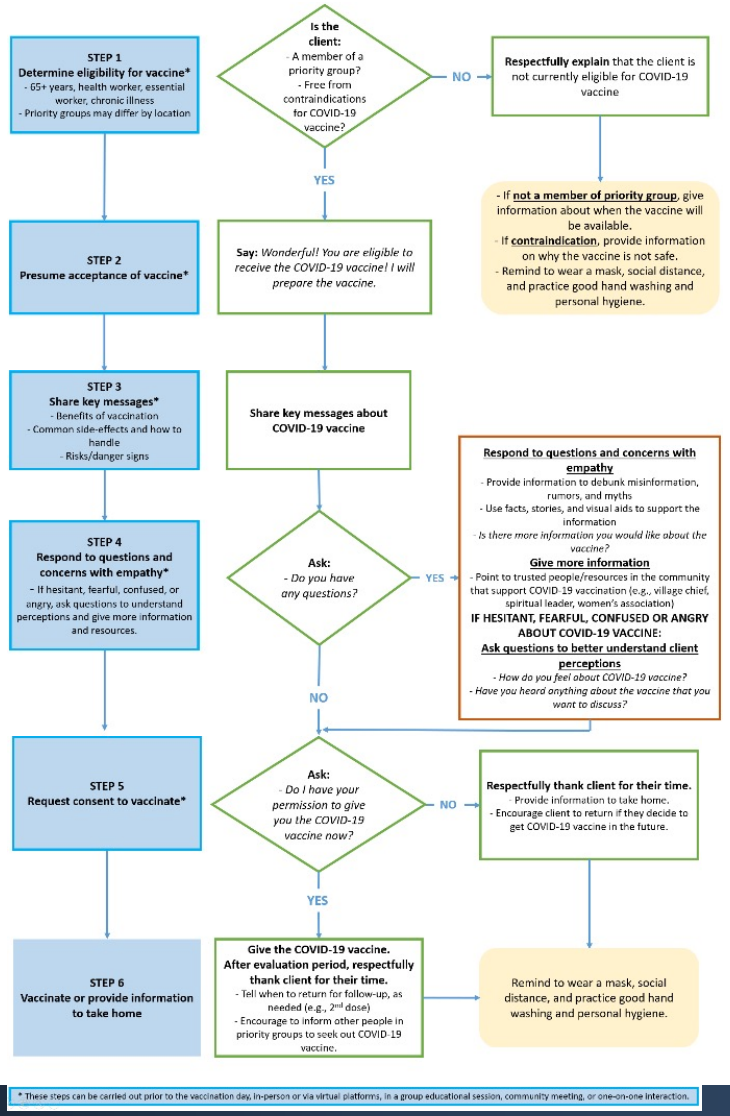
Explore reasons for wanting to get vaccinated

Share your motivations and what helped you overcome any concerns.





Communicating about COVID vaccine – take a lesson from the medical community



Listen for questions and concerns about:

- *Vaccine safety*
- *Vaccine priority groups*
- *Vaccine shopping*

Use language:

- *Respectful greeting and empathy*
- *Language to presume acceptance*
- *How to respond to questions with empathy*
- *Keep the conversation alive …*

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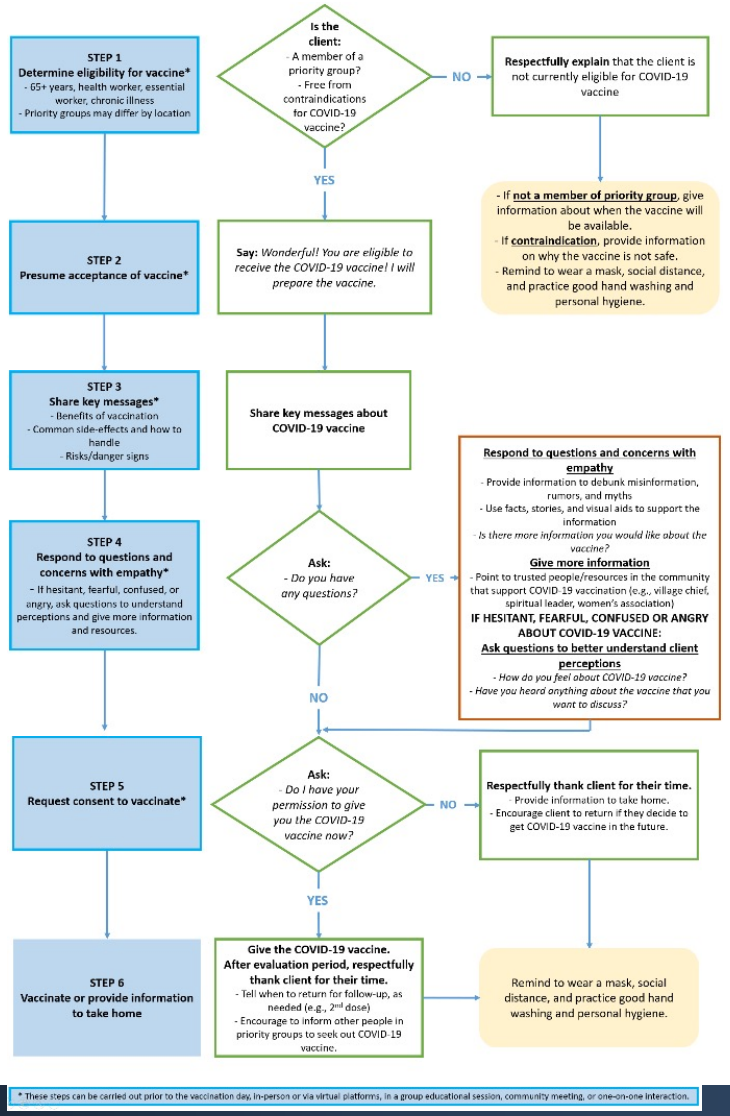

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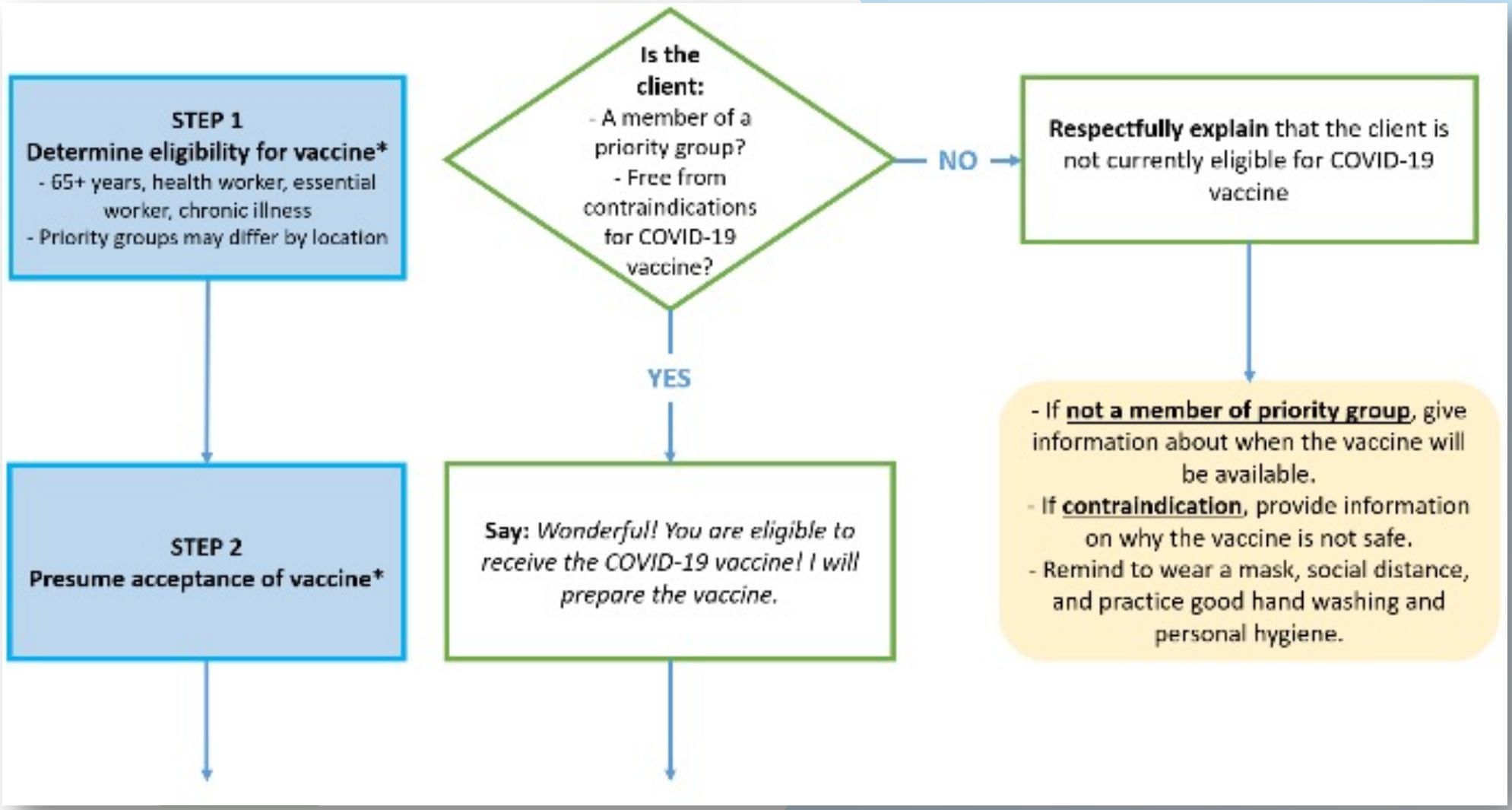

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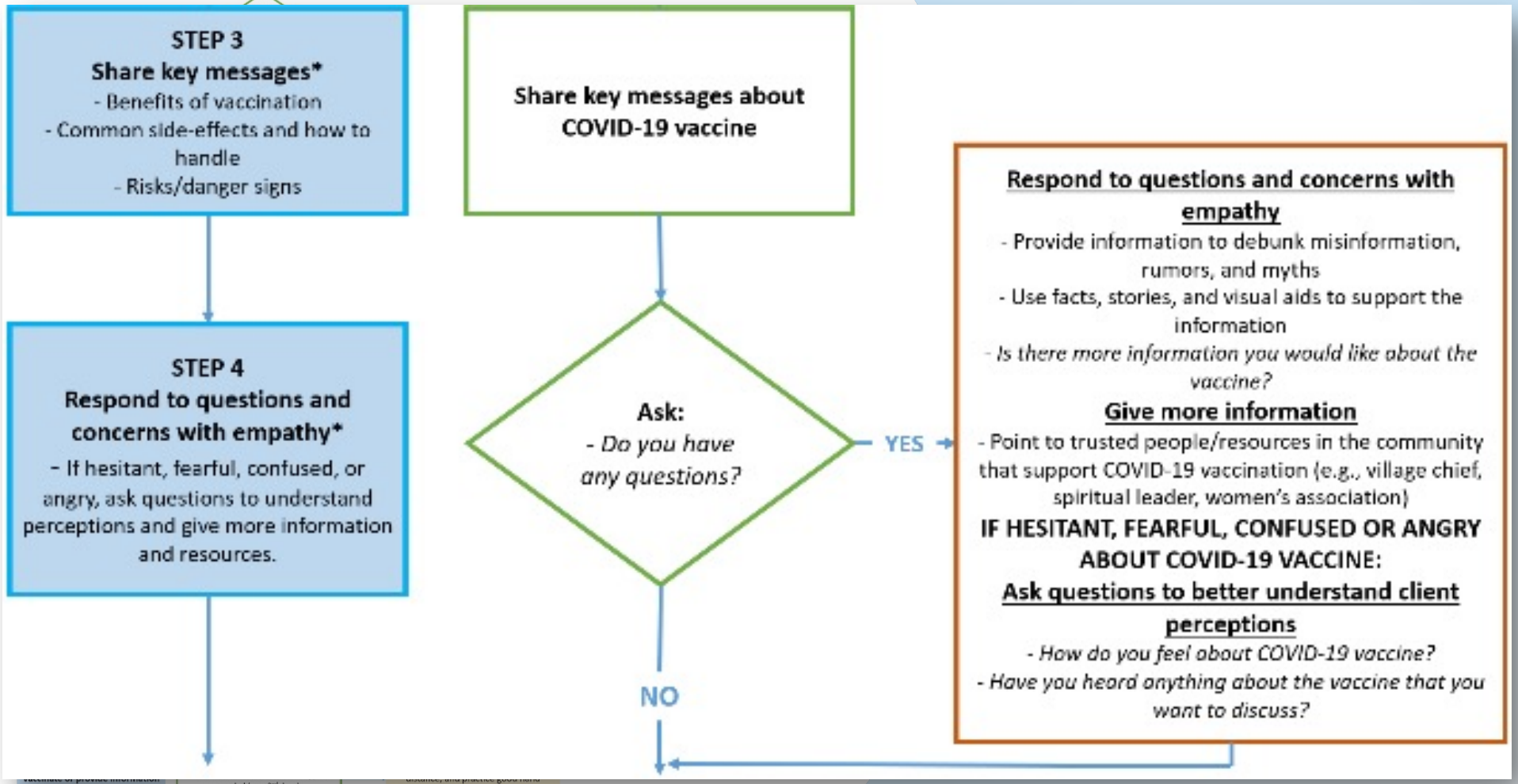

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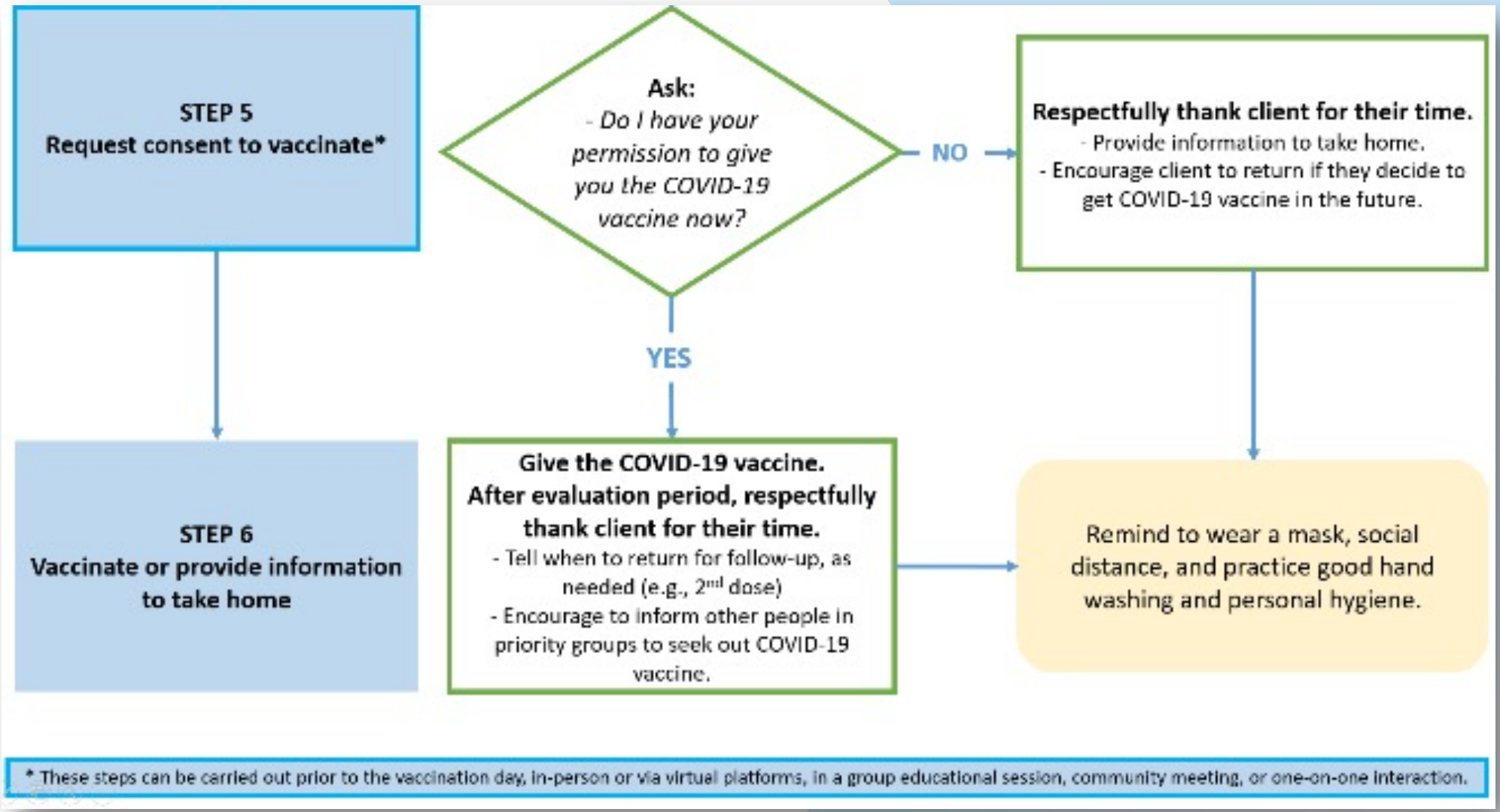
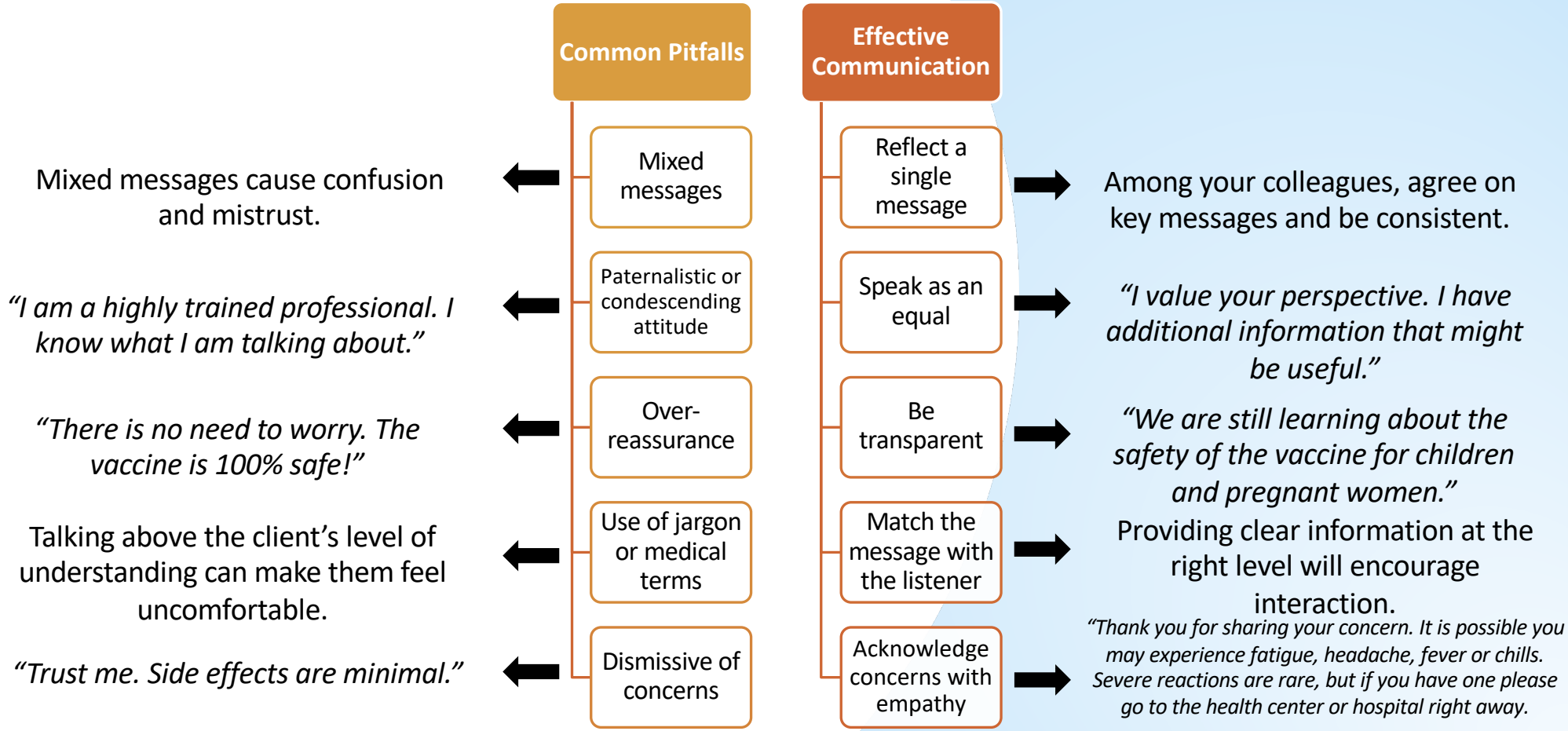


* These steps can be carried out prior to the vaccination day, in-person or via virtual platforms, in a group educational session, community meeting, or one-on-one interaction.

Communicating Messages



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How faith leaders can boost vaccine confidence

What you can do

1. Lead by example

- Openly **share your support** for vaccination.
- Share your **personal experience** of getting vaccinated.

2. Build trust

- Let people know they can come to you if they have questions or need advice – **run Q&A sessions**.
- Listen to any concerns and communicate in a way that is **respectful and builds trust**.

3. Break down barriers

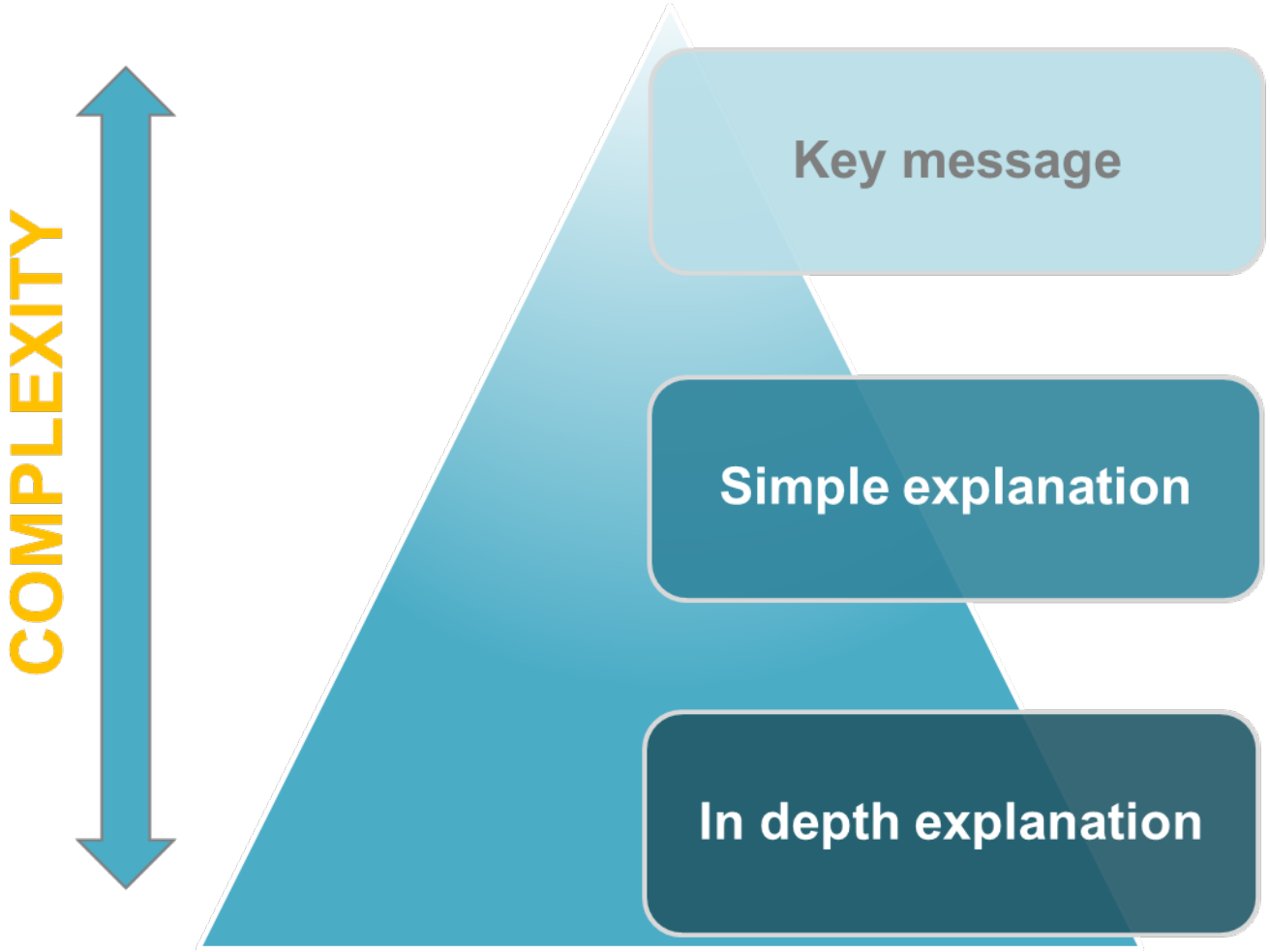
- Many people's decision to get vaccinated ultimately comes down **to whether it is convenient**
- Set up a **fund for child care or travel costs** for parents to get to their vaccination appointments.
- **Advocate with local businesses** to give employees paid time off.
- Consider how you can help people to make vaccination appointments, organize transport or offer any other assistance that might help **make it easy** for someone to get vaccinated.

And help people to remember…

- Vaccines are safe, effective and an important part of the COVID-19 response – **but stopping the spread of disease remains key.**
- Do what you can to **facilitate** and **remind people** to continue to practice precautions **even after vaccination**, such as:

  - physical distancing
  - wearing a mask
  - keeping rooms well ventilated
  - avoiding crowds
  - cleaning hands
  - coughing into a bent elbow or tissue

Providing a ‘hierarchy’ of information



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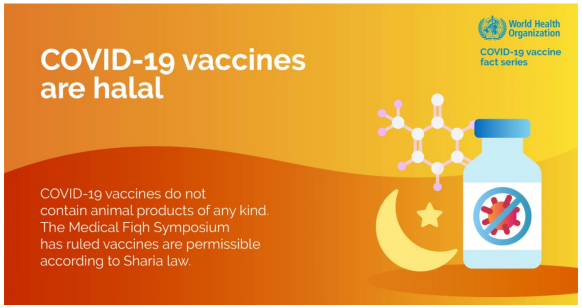
Addressing current issues in COVID-19 vaccination

Do vaccines contain pork products? Are they halal?

Key message:

COVID-19 vaccines are halal. They do not contain pork or animal products of any kind.

Simple explanation:



In depth explanation:

We don't have one. Is more info needed?

Will vaccines cause blood clots?

Key message:

A very rare but serious side effect (blood clotting with low platelets) has been reported in a very small number of people after their first dose of the AstraZeneca and the J&J vaccines. The benefits of vaccination are far greater than the risk of this rare side effect; blood clots are far more commonly caused by COVID-19 than by the vaccine. Millions of doses of AstraZeneca have been administered with very few serious side effects.

Simple explanation:

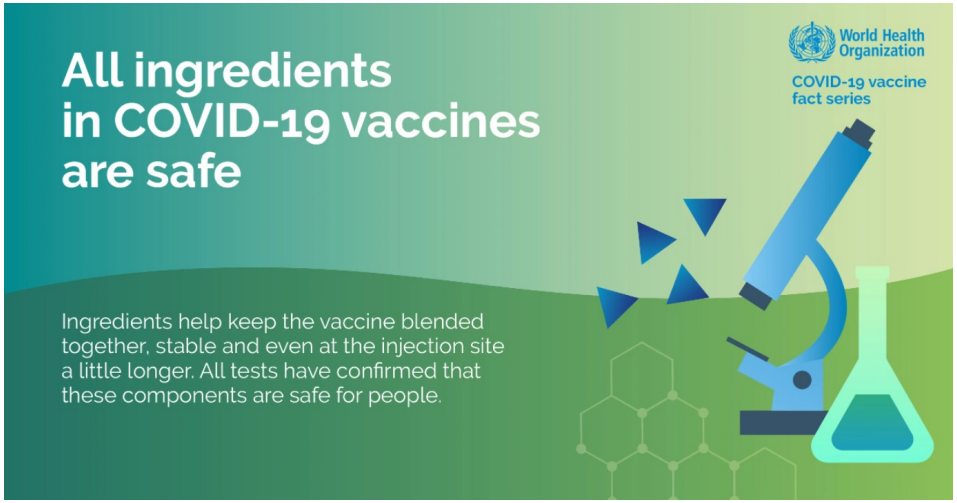
Social media tiles in development.

In depth explanation:

GACVS Statement – AstraZeneca, 16 April 2021

EMA Statement – AstraZeneca, 18 April 2021

GACVS Statement - J&J, 19 May 2021



Which vaccine is most effective?

Key message:

All COVID-19 vaccines approved for use by WHO are highly effective at preventing severe illness or death. When it's your turn to be vaccinated, take whichever vaccine you are offered first.

Simple explanation:

- Science in 5: Which vaccine should I take and what about side effects?

In depth explanation:

- Vaccines Explained: The different types of COVID-19 vaccines
- Individual information on vaccines:
  - AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine
  - Johnson and Johnson
  - Moderna
  - Pfizer/BionTech
  - Sinopharm
  - Sinovac

What effect will variants like the Delta variant have on vaccines?

Key message:

All of the WHO emergency use listed vaccines do protect against severe disease, hospitalization and death due to the delta variant. As soon as it is your turn, make sure you get vaccinated to protect yourself against all COVID-19 variants. Whether you are vaccinated or not, continue to practice all the protective behaviours to protect yourself and others.

Simple explanation:

- Science in 5 (short video): The delta variant and COVID-19 vaccines

In depth explanation:

- Vaccines Explained (long read with graphics): The effects of virus variants on COVID-19 vaccines

Why do I still need to wear a mask after I've been vaccinated?

Key message:

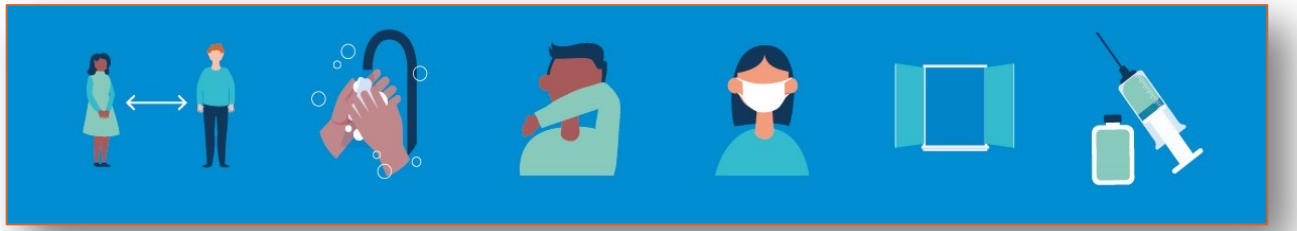
Vaccination against COVID-19 is **highly effective** against severe symptoms and death. We still don't know to what extent being vaccinated stops you picking up the virus and passing it on to others. The best way to **protect yourself** from the small remaining risk of illness and to **avoid infecting others** is to keep practicing the key protective behaviours, including wearing a mask.

Simple explanation:

Science in 5 (short video) – I've been vaccinated – What next?

In depth explanation:

Vaccine explain series (long form read with graphics)



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