

UPDATE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Stay informed. Take precautions. Stay safe.

Dear Members,

The COVID-19 vaccine has proven to be a critical measure toward safeguarding assisted living communities from the threat of the virus. As we became aware of the hesitancy among ALR staff in receiving vaccines, we provided resources to assist you in [January](#), in addition to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program information found [here](#), which we shared in our most recent newsletter. While the resident population has seen outstanding rates of vaccination and assisted living staff have accepted the vaccine at high levels, we see from the data that there is room for improvement with ALR staff vaccine acceptance, and this effort is critical to resident and staff safety and infection control. In an effort to understand vaccine hesitancy among ALR staff and to provide support and suggestions for improving the staff vaccine acceptance rate, Mass-ALA conducted a state-wide survey of ALRs this spring.

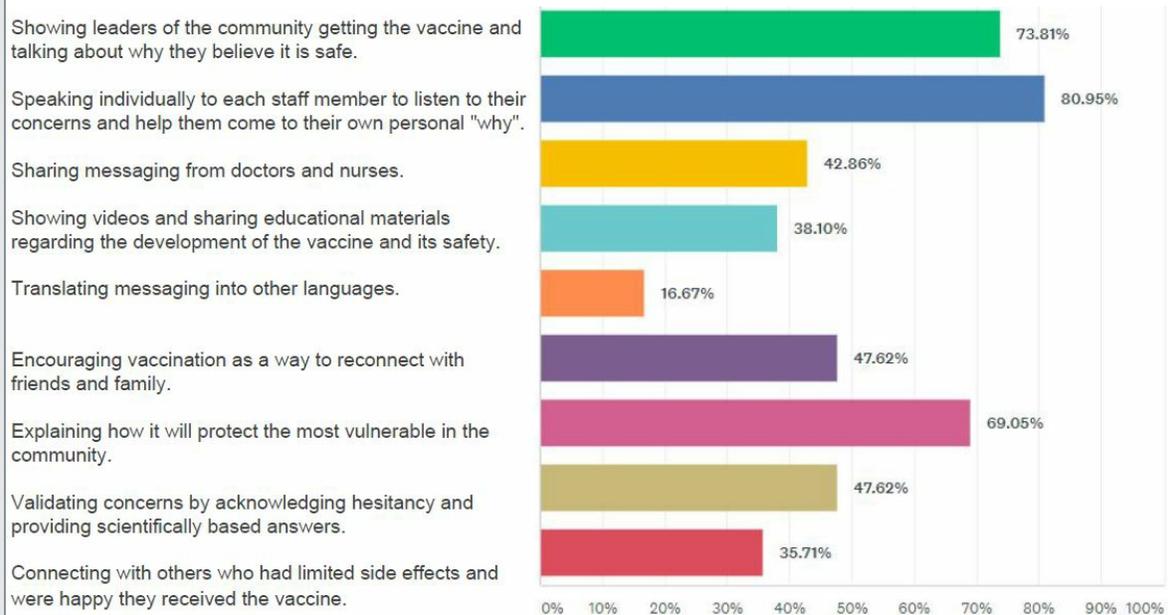
Some of the questions asked were:

- Do you feel that you have had adequate information to provide staff and residents as they consider the vaccine?
- What type of additional support would you find helpful in order to increase vaccine uptake among staff and residents?
- What has been your biggest challenge in getting staff and residents fully vaccinated?
- What has been your most successful approach in overcoming vaccine hesitancy?

As results of the survey were analyzed and research on vaccine hesitancy was conducted, Mass-ALA has compiled the following successful strategies for overcoming vaccine hesitancy:

1. Provide videos and educational materials regarding the development of the vaccine and its safety. We encourage you to share this video offered by both the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the State of Massachusetts, which outlines the safety and efficacy of the vaccine (see an example of a vaccine hesitancy [video here](#)).
2. It would be helpful to some people if they could discuss the vaccine with their primary care physician or health care provider. Encouraging staff to do this would help them to understand that it is approved by people they trust outside of the work environment.
3. Encourage people to get vaccinated as a measure they can take toward returning to a more normal human connection. The protection that it offers to the **least** vulnerable in our community can be a major step toward limiting the spread of the virus to the **most** vulnerable in our community.
4. Use a positive tone, demonstrating respect for each person's right to make

- this choice and validating their concerns by acknowledging their hesitancy, and then providing scientifically-based answers to their questions.
5. It's important to have a non-judgmental attitude toward those who are hesitant. Making every effort to avoid being pushy or injecting guilt or shame will go a long way in helping people to remain open and willing to engage in dialogue about this.
 6. Most importantly – listen. Listen with an open heart and mind when staff members express concern about receiving the vaccine and provide them with positive, encouraging information in a supportive and non-coercive manner.
 7. Offer translation services to those staff members who may experience a language barrier, and therefore, a lack of clear understanding of the benefits of the vaccine.
 8. Lead by example. Leaders in the community can speak volumes about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine by accepting it themselves and sharing their reasons for doing so.
- The graph below indicates some of the measures ALRs have employed to increase vaccine acceptance rates, all of which represent answers we received in our survey. Please [click here](#) to view a larger image of the graph.



In addition to the suggestions listed above, please [click here](#) to view a factsheet distributed by EOEa that offers valuable information on resources available to assist with and support vaccination of staff, residents, and visitors in ALRs.

If you have any questions, please contact us at Mass-ALA@mass-ala.org.

**The information provided in this COVID 19 update is solely for general informational purposes to assist in understanding the evolving guidance regarding the current COVID 19 public health threat. It is not intended to be a primary public health or medical resource but is provided as a clearinghouse for or compilation of various guidance issued by official and related sources.*