

**We're open
to talking.**

**We need
balance.**

**We've done our
homework.**

**We're not
'anti-vaxxers'.**

**We're not
getting the full
story.**

Communicating with people who are unvaccinated against COVID-19

This brief report summarises perspectives on COVID-19 vaccines of unvaccinated adults living in Australia who were interviewed in late 2021. Informed by these findings, our recommendations aim to improve communication between health authorities, providers, and unvaccinated individuals and their friends and families.

Unvaccinated adults' perspectives on COVID-19 vaccines:

We're not getting the full story

Participants described a lack of transparency regarding COVID-19 vaccine safety and effectiveness.

We're not 'anti-vaxxers'

Participants spoke about being labelled 'anti-vaxxers' but stressed that they were not against immunisation in general.

We've done our homework

Participants described searching for 'accurate and holistic' information (from friends and family, alternative views online, including from activists).

We need balance

Participants described feeling pressured into vaccination, without opportunities to consider alternative options, preferring more balance in information from health authorities and providers.

We're open to talking

Participants reported willingness to discuss COVID-19 vaccination with family and friends, as long as the conversation was respectful of different views and objectively approached.

Our recommendations



For health authorities, vaccine advocacy organisations and other institutional stakeholders:

- Listen to and maintain two-way communication with community members. Avoid equating having concerns and questions about COVID-19 vaccines with being anti-vaccine. Make information straightforward and easy to follow, using visual aids where possible.



For community members who remain unvaccinated:

- Consider the credibility of information sources. Consider if information is based on objective research and evidence. Does the information acknowledge uncertainties, talk about any funding received, or use sensational language? Asking these questions can help with judging trustworthiness of sources.



For health and immunisation providers:

- Seek out training to build confidence and skills around [having conversations with vaccine-hesitant people](#)
- Be ready to tailor conversations to a range of positions on vaccination, from refusing to hesitant about the COVID-19 vaccines (including receiving a booster vaccine)
- Use resources to support conversations: [The COVID-19 Decision Aid](#) [Vaccination glossary](#)
- Make a positive recommendation to vaccinate.



For individuals having conversations with vaccine-hesitant family/friends:

- Listen, acknowledge and respond to emotions about COVID-19 vaccines. Always be respectful.
- Offer to share information from reputable sources.