

Grapevine - making information accessible

The
Strategy
Unit.



Overview

Reference: 05

Location: Coventry and Warwickshire

Target Group: People with disabilities

Initiative type: Information

Contact

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Top Tip

Make information accessible so that people have a voice. Start these conversations early and continue them; people need to understand this information to make informed decisions on their own terms.

Why is this important to us?

We realised that many people with learning disabilities and/or autism that we work with had fears about the vaccine, sometimes based on misinformation, and were reluctant to get the vaccine. People were concerned about not having somebody with them when getting their vaccination; their ability to provide the right information (such as their NHS number), and not knowing what reasonable adjustments to request. They were also concerned about side effects and allergic reactions, as people with learning disabilities and/or autism are also more likely to have multiple health conditions. There was also a lot of anxiety around how quickly the vaccine had been produced.

What are we doing?

In addition to our existing campaigns and training on learning disability awareness, we undertook a wide range of activities to provide and share accessible information about COVID-19 and vaccination for people with learning disabilities, and people with disabilities more generally. First, we listened and collated a list of concerns and questions we had heard, and we shared these with health commissioners. Through this, we received support from healthcare professionals to run virtual presentations to address conspiracy theories around the vaccine, including a question and answer session. We have also delivered five educational sessions on the vaccine and provided information on how to spot and report vaccine scams.

Who is involved?

The Health Team at Grapevine, which includes project workers and individuals with learning disabilities as project volunteers. We've also collaborated with the clinical commissioning group and local authority to produce and share myth busting videos from healthcare professionals

What works for us?

For us, a successful initiative means that everyone we're working with, staff included, have had their vaccine unless they are medically unable to. For example, before two of our information sessions which we delivered to 20 people, around half of the audience said they were hesitant- one measure of success is that now all of those who attended these sessions have been vaccinated. What helped most was every time healthcare staff or our volunteers had their vaccination, we put it on Facebook to answer people's questions and dispel the misinformation- **we reached around 1160 people through social media!** Through reassurance and NHS organisations sharing our posts, we made factual information about the vaccine more accessible and managed to change a lot of people's minds.