

Examining Novel Pro-Vaccination Education Techniques to Promote Vaccine Uptake in an Outpatient Pediatric Setting

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Despite being recognized as one of the most effective public health measures, in today's climate, vaccinations are viewed as unsafe and unnecessary by an increasing number of individuals.¹ Vaccine hesitancy results from a complex mix of social and political influences, cultural and religious beliefs, the availability of and ability to interpret health and scientific information, and personal and population experiences of health systems and government policies. Vaccine hesitancy was identified as one of the World Health Organization's top ten global health threats in 2019.⁴ Vaccine hesitancy, refusal, and an unmonitored or unstudied delayed schedule threaten the existence of herd immunity and protection of children, who are a vulnerable population.³ Recently, vaccine hesitancy and refusal has led to a significant increase in vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and pertussis.²

This study aims to examine whether provider education using a presumptive technique for introducing vaccines ("She's due for some vaccines today") versus participatory technique ("How do you feel about vaccines today?") is associated with an increase in vaccination uptake. One novel component of this study is the standardized third mixed technique of both presumptive and participatory to consider the present landscape of vaccine hesitancy as recently promoted by social media and government influences.

This pilot study will be a single center prospective cohort conducted at an outpatient pediatric clinic associated with Community Memorial Hospital and is currently pending IRB approval. This study will focus on the parents' perspectives vaccines for ages ranging from newborns to 18. Methodology includes identifying whether parents are in favor of vaccines or are vaccine hesitant through a standardized questionnaire. One third of patients will be randomized into the presumptive technique, one third into the participatory technique, and one third into a novel, modern technique. The pilot program will elucidate strengths and weaknesses of the intervention prior to expansion across pediatric clinics in Ventura County.

This study aims to contribute to the body of literature regarding effective ways to increase vaccine uptake in pediatric patients. The novel technique offers parents evidence-based information while partnering with them to make a shared decision for their child's health. We believe these discussions are particularly pertinent given the recent uptick in vaccine hesitation or refusal and hope to elucidate a clearer path forward for pediatricians as they guide parents

towards making decisions for their children.

References:

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