

Understanding people and their individual circumstances

BACKGROUND

A 40-year-old Caribbean woman was concerned about the Covid-19 vaccine and did not want to have it. She also has a 20-year-old son with learning disabilities who is nonverbal. She was worried about him having the vaccine and what the possible side effects may be for the two of them. Their family and close friends were advising against the vaccine which put a lot of pressure on the patient.

There had been a Covid-19 outbreak at their son's school which was of great concern to the patient and meant they were having to isolate at home – with limited support from the school.

There were many factors causing pressure to the patient, not only from their peers but also due to the support needed for their son in being able to access his vaccination too if they were to change their mind.

THE APPROACH

David, Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) has a strong relationship with his patient and spent time discussing their worries and concerns. They had several phone calls over two weeks where David provided an opportunity for his patient to have someone they could talk to and who would listen, offering reassurance.

They talked about the advantages to both the patient and their son, what information was available and the options for vaccination centres that were easy to access, taking into consideration the fact their son may be scared about the experience and the unfamiliar surroundings.

David attends Kilburn Co-op Social Prescribing Team meetings to discuss case studies with his colleagues. They meet regularly and discuss the challenges they are experiencing with patients who are refusing the vaccine and would share ideas to find a solution. This was always valuable to the team and helped to problem solve.

TOP TIPS

- Take time to speak to your patients to gain a deeper understanding about what the reasons or causes may be for their concerns or objections.
- Explore options available to patients and see what works for them.
- Utilise your relationships with patients to support GPs who may need help with contacting patients who are concerned.
- Share your challenges with colleagues to find solutions for your patient.

THE OUTCOME

David found a local vaccination clinic, (maximum of 10 people at a time), which was perfect to accommodate the family. Following their conversations, the patient felt confident to have the vaccine along with their son. They have now had both vaccines.

Final thoughts from David...

David is so pleased that the family have now had both vaccines and that he dedicated time to talk to and reassure his patient during the two weeks.

David highlighted that there will be times where people may prefer to speak to their GP for clinical reassurance, to understand the science and data too, an SPLW can help to facilitate this.

“The relationship between a Social Prescribing Link Worker (SPLW) and patient is extremely valuable and offers a great opportunity to better support GPs.

If patients continue to decline the vaccine, David recommends GPs reach out to their SPLWs to contact these individuals, to have a more in-depth conversations and unpick what the reasons or factors may be.

People just need time to talk things through and often develop a great trust with their SPLW”

David Sagman, SPLW

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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This case study has been produced by **Healthy London Partnership** in support of the development of social prescribing in London and National Covid-19 vaccination programme. For more information about this case study or to put forward your scheme as a potential case study, please contact hlp.socialprescribing@nhs.net