

COVID-19 and serious mental illness: A new role for psychiatric providers as vaccine ambassadors

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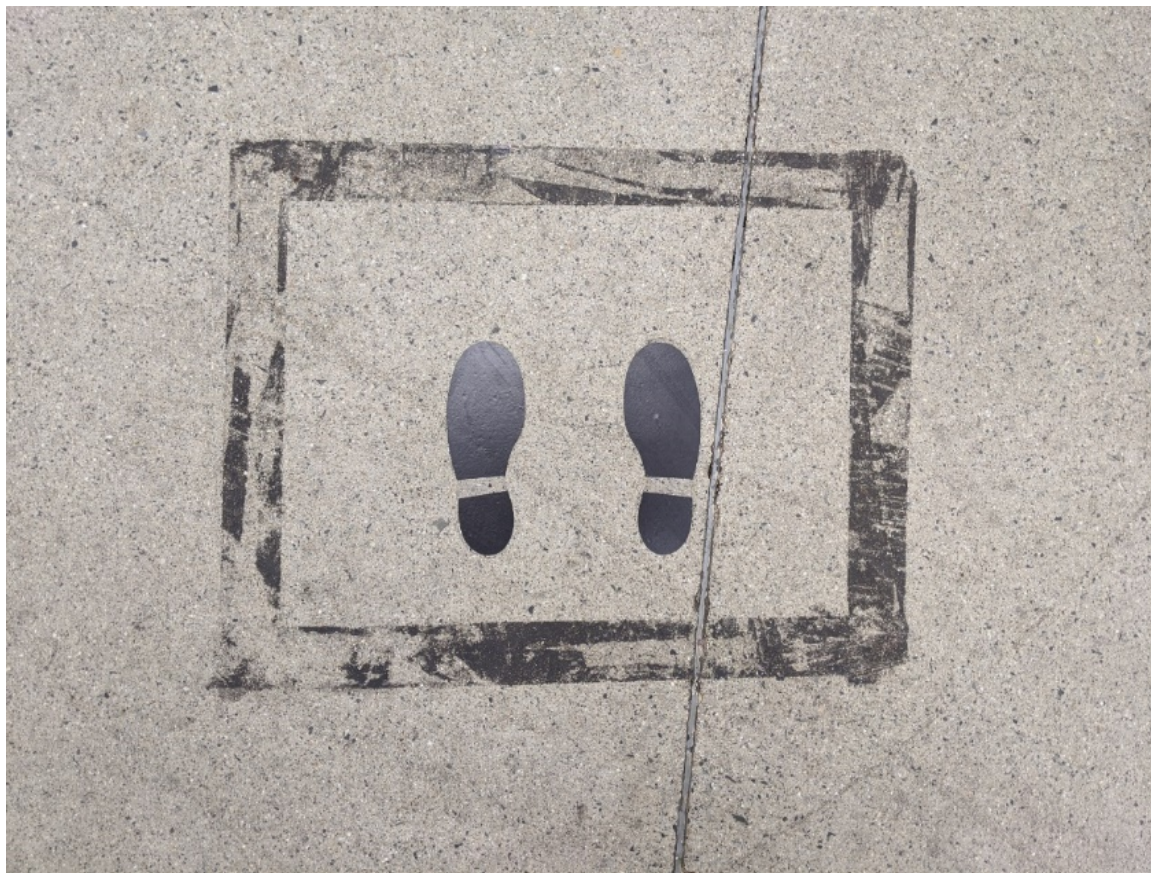
Boston, Massachusetts

Disclosures

I have the following relevant financial relationship with a commercial interest to disclose (recipient SELF; content area SCHIZOPHRENIA):

- Alkermes – Research grant (to institution), consultant honoraria (Advisory Board)
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THE PROBLEM



The shocking reality...

Risk factors for mortality from COVID-19

#1 Age

#2 Diagnosis of schizophrenia

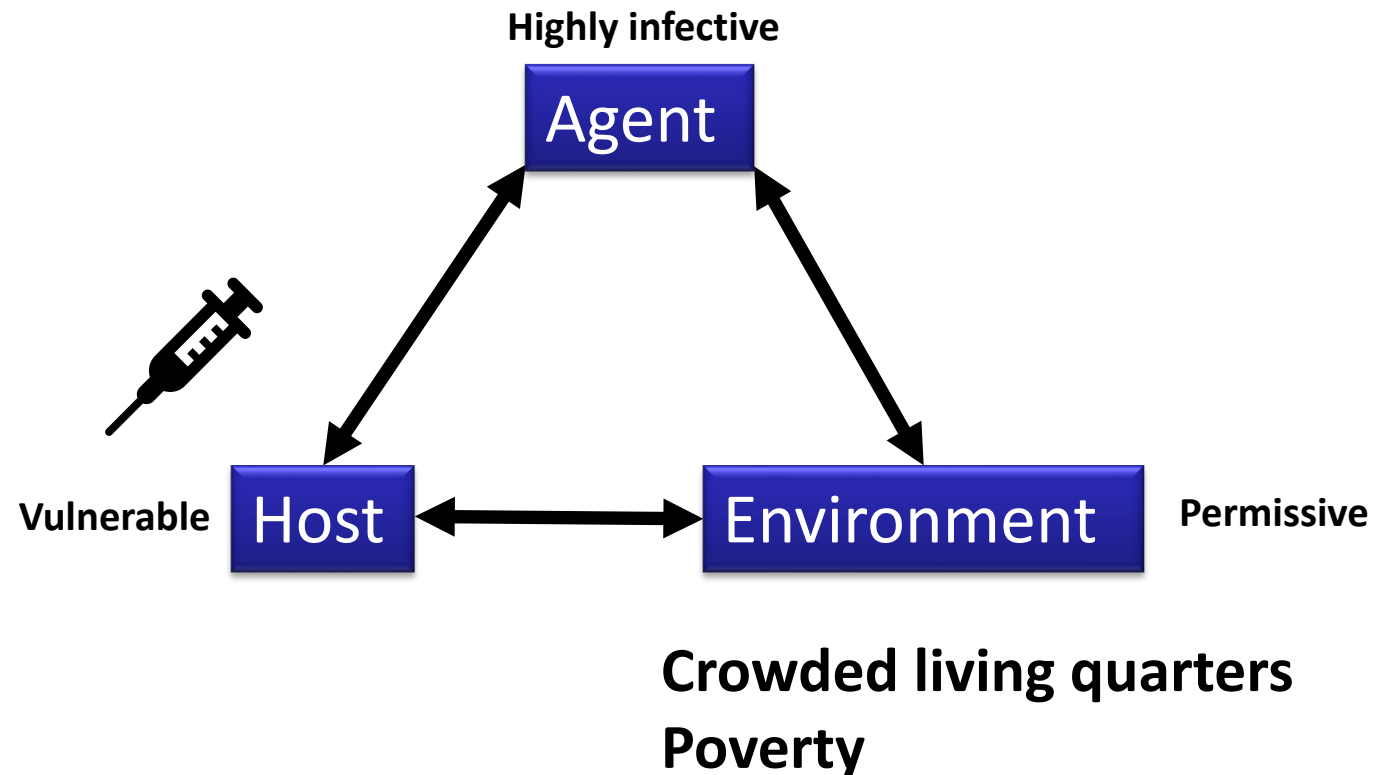
“Tragic” epidemiologic triad of SMI and COVID-19

Psychiatric illness

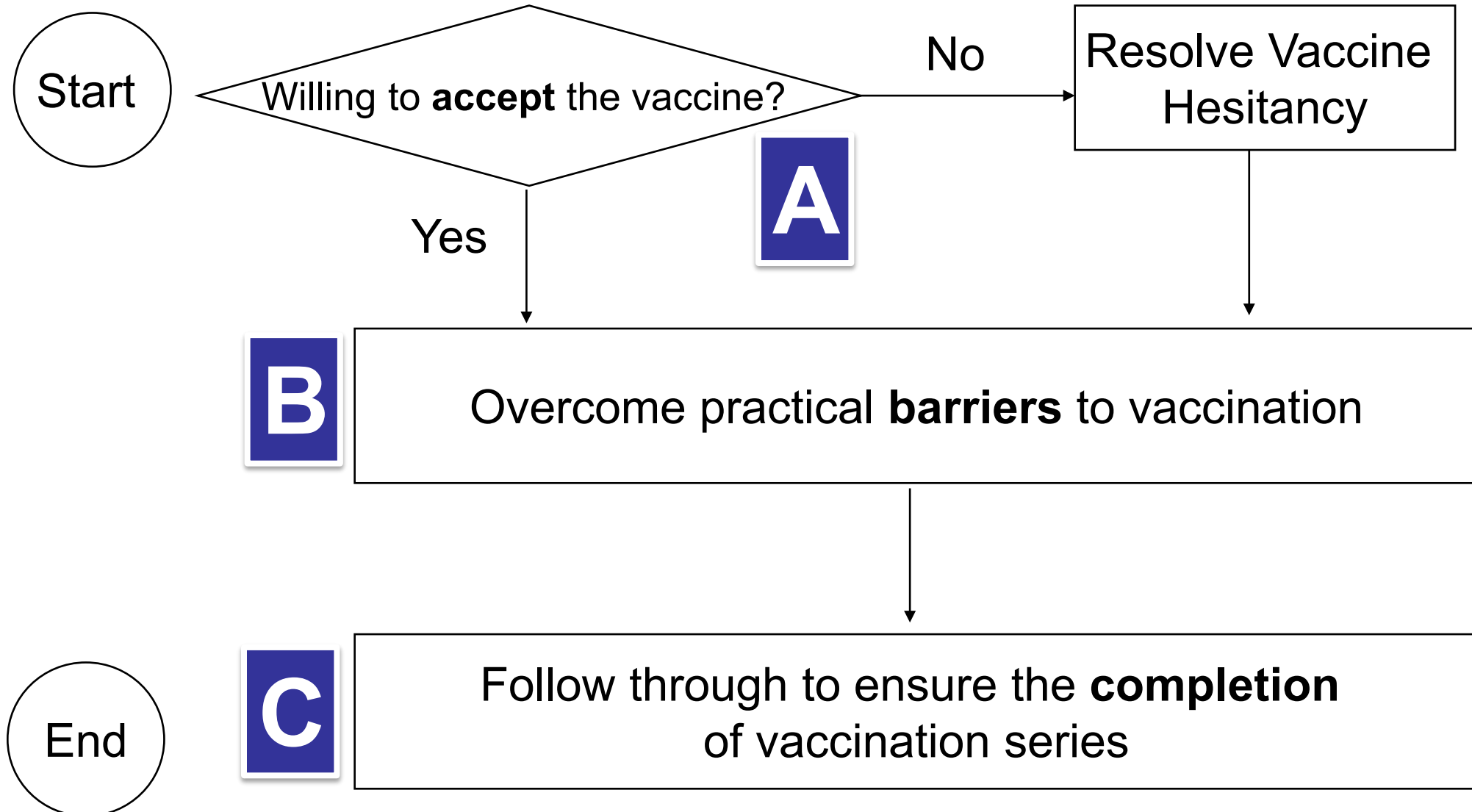
- Acute psychosis/mania
- Disorganization
- Negative symptoms
- Cognitive difficulties

Medical comorbidities

- Obesity
- Smoking
- Lung disease
- Diabetes

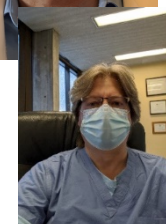


Operation Warp Speed alone is insufficient





Erich Lindemann Mental Health Center
Boston, Massachusetts



THE SOLUTION

QI project at Freedom Trail Clinic



- Problem
 - Patients with SMI have lower vaccination rates than general population
 - Psychiatric providers are a missed opportunity (trust, skill set, frequent contact)
- Aim
 - Achieve 90% COVID-19 vaccination rate in our clozapine clinic
- Intervention
 - Engage and enlist psychiatric providers in the vaccine effort
 - Improve process (standardize vaccine discussion, tracking tool)
- Outcome
 - Pending (target date June 30, 2021)

Lorenz RA et al. *Int J Psychiatry Med.* 2013;46(1):1-13.

Miles LW et al. *J Am Psychiatr Nurses Assoc.* 2020;26(2):172-180.

Preventive care (vaccinations) as legitimate role for mental health care system

- Increase COVID-19 vaccination uptake
 - Enlist mental health staff to overcome barriers
 - Ensure patient follow-up with vaccination series completion
 - Explore mobile clinic at the FTC (with a pharmacist) to offer "shots in arms" in a mental health setting
- Broaden vaccination efforts beyond COVID-19
 - Annual flu vaccine
- View vaccination equity as part of larger effort to reduce health disparities



Project Leader

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MGH-McLean psychiatry residents rotating through the Freedom Trail Clinic (FTC)

Project Sponsors

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THANK YOU!

