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Overview

Despite COVID-19 vaccines being available to 12-17 year olds since May, 2021 and to 5-11 year olds since November, 2021, vaccine uptake remains suboptimal. Innovative strategies are needed to improve pediatric COVID-19 vaccination rates. CONFIDENCE: Clinicians for Effective COVID-19 Vaccine Conversations for Youth and Adolescents was developed to support clinicians in conversations with vaccine hesitant and resistant. The intervention was developed by drawing on local formative research and evidence-based practices for increasing uptake of other pediatric vaccines. In Spring, 2021 we conducted a pilot test in a pediatric clinic within the UMass Memorial Health system to assess feasibility and acceptability of the CONFIDENCE intervention as well as to assess preliminary measures of parental intention to vaccinate their children.

Main Questions

- How feasible and acceptable was the CONFIDENCE intervention to participating pediatric providers?
- How acceptable was the CONFIDENCE intervention to parents of children ages 5 to 17?
- What changes were observed in parents' intention to vaccinate and satisfaction with conversations about COVID-19 vaccination with their pediatricians?

Study

This study focused on improving local pediatricians' communication with parents. The specific components of the CONFIDENCE included: a webinar training focusing on strategies to communicate with COVID-19 vaccine hesitant and resistant parents that included a role-playing video to outline the communication approach, a poster campaign featuring clinic providers, and parent-facing educational materials. The main component of the intervention was the communication training that outlined a three-step provider-delivered counseling algorithm: (1) assess vaccine readiness (2) draw on motivational interviewing principles to address hesitancy or resistance and (3), share a personal vaccine experience. Providers also shared personal vaccine stories through the poster campaign and posters were hung outside exam rooms. The parent-facing materials were made available in nine languages and kept stocked in exam rooms. We assessed feasibility and acceptability through interviews with providers and measured preliminary vaccine intention outcomes with a pre-post parent survey. Interviews were analyzed using rapid qualitative methods. We generated descriptive statistics for variables on the parent survey and assessed pre-post differences.

The Bottom Line

CONFIDENCE is a low-touch, multicomponent intervention that was developed by drawing from evidence-based practice and local formative research. The initial pilot test produced positive results with providers reporting high levels of feasibility and acceptability and parents reporting increases in intention to vaccinate their children for COVID-19.

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Image from the role-playing video for pediatric clinicians.

Spotlight on Results

- Providers who participated in interviews (n = 4) reported high levels of feasibility and acceptability of the CONFIDENCE intervention
- After implementation of the CONFIDENCE intervention
 - Parent report of whether the provider discussed COVID-19 vaccination with them increased by 10.7 percentage points
 - There was an 11.1 percentage point increase in parents' report of being "very satisfied" with their conversation about COVID-19 vaccination with their pediatrician.

Call for Action

The approaches used in the CONFIDENCE intervention may be appropriate to reduce hesitancy around COVID-19 vaccination. Next steps will be to use more rigorous methods to further test efficacy and effectiveness of the CONFIDENCE intervention and to identify any potential adaptations to implement.

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