

How to Make the COVID-19 Vaccine More Inclusive of People with IDD

THE PROBLEM

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) face enormous disparities in health care systems. Inequity, injustice, and inconsistent policies led to glaring gaps in health care, social exclusion, and isolation in the community and at home. This divide in care is also true in relation to communicable diseases and the ability to obtain a vaccine.

In spite of vaccine access and availability, it is important to ensure that all resources are available to caregivers to ensure individuals with IDD are given priority for vaccination and encouraged to consider booster doses to protect themselves.



Individuals with IDD face a heightened risk of infection, making vaccination especially important for their protection.



5 WAYS TO MAKE THE COVID-19 VACCINE MORE EQUITABLE FOR PEOPLE WITH IDD

- 1 PRIORITIZE PEOPLE WITH IDD FOR VACCINES:** Advocate for people with IDD about the benefits of vaccination to stay safe and healthy. Special Olympics aims to create awareness and encourage vaccinations for people with IDD. **Join Special Olympics' advocacy efforts and visit www.specialolympics.org for more information!**
- 2 EDUCATE PEOPLE WITH IDD AND THEIR CAREGIVERS:** Develop vaccine education resources that respond to specific concerns and share them in multiple accessible formats to reduce vaccine hesitancy and create demand. **Visit www.specialolympics.org and use the accessible education materials!**
- 3 MAKE VACCINE DISTRIBUTION INCLUSIVE:** Provide online resources and toolkits about vaccine accessibility. Special Olympics has decades of experience hosting low barrier, high quality, mobile health experiences through Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®. **Partner with Special Olympics to host a vaccination event targeting people with IDD!**
- 4 TRAIN HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:** Require health care providers, who give vaccines, to complete training about treating people with IDD. Engage with our healthcare training resources at elearn.specialolympics.org/health or contact HealthEducation@specialolympics.org to learn more about how you and Special Olympics can work together to increase the reach of this training.
- 5 GATHER DATA:** Encourage health systems to gather information about the number of people with IDD who receive the annual vaccines. **Continue to raise awareness and advocate for those with disabilities!**