

Mobilizing the Underserved!



Laura Lee Hall
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Laura Lee Hall, PhD, leads a major collaborative effort to evaluate and test messages to encourage COVID-19 vaccination among those in underserved and minority communities.

Here are key take-aways from her conversation with Ken Banta about the challenges we face in encouraging COVID-19 vaccination:

1. The *Health Champions Campaign* provides ready-to-use resources to encourage COVID-19 vaccination, at no charge.
2. Materials were developed by experts and community members and are available in English and Spanish.
3. The *Campaign* stands ready to help leaders who need tailored materials to meet special needs.
4. Businesses are important anchors for promoting sustainable community health.

The *Health Champions Campaign* is a flagship of your COVID-19 work. Tell us about it.

The *Health Champions Campaign* provides resources to support communications about COVID-19 vaccination. Those resources include social media posts, draft e-news briefs, videos, infographics, pictograms, editorials and a “How-To” kit. We’ve taken information that can be very ‘dry’ and made it interesting. The *Campaign* helps improve vaccination rates with quality improvement, provider and patient education and community engagement tools.

The *Health Champions Campaign* provides resources to support communications about COVID-19 vaccination.

In fact, even our *Campaign* works together as a community. We are like-minded people. Some are leaders of organizations, or health care providers. Some are community activists. What unites us is supporting one another as we promote COVID vaccinations.

Much of the lag in immunization rates is caused by barriers to optimal health care.

This is especially important because so much of the lag in immunization rates is caused by barriers to optimal health care and the best outcomes that people of color and underserved populations face.

We help by providing “hands-on” support with our materials. We’ve worked together as peers and with experts to produce these.



I've seen these materials and they seem tailored to resonate with different communities, age groups and ethnicities. Was that intentional?

Absolutely. These materials are based on the questions and issues on people's minds. The communities we serve have questions, they have biases, and they have beliefs that may not be consistent with the evidence provided by healthcare experts. In addition, there are things they don't know.

We worked to identify all of the issues that are important, especially those likely to be misunderstood. Then, we developed and tested our messages and materials in the community. We also developed a companion set of materials and messages in Spanish and tested those in Spanish-speaking communities.

Some leaders outside of healthcare might wonder why they should be involved in a public health campaign. What would you say to them?

Every community needs good corporate citizens. And many corporate citizens are widely respected among members of the community. That means their voices as leaders are very important. It reminds the community that those leaders are with them. It tells them that corporations have a stake in the health of their employees and customers. We've been gratified to see companies lending their voices to vaccine equity.

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What about healthcare leaders, will the *Campaign* materials help them?

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One strength of healthcare is the fact that they hire people from the community. Their employees share the culture, language, and beliefs with the community. Many also share some hesitancy about vaccination. Even some who have had a close look at the devastation of COVID-19 can share fears about the vaccine.

Campaign resources can help with them. Several communications are from physicians in practice, intended to be used with staff. They address the issues, the science, the rationale and appeal to them on behalf of their patients. Ongoing communications with staff accrue benefit over time. Providing education to staff and revealing that they've gotten their own vaccine can be important. If people see the physicians, nurses and the practice manager being vaccinated, that will help encourage them to do likewise. Sure, we all have formal structures and hierarchies, we need those, and leadership needs to be behind vaccination. The informal networks are important, too, so long as we make sure that peer-to-peer communications, which can take longer to work, reflect the most up-to-date science.

Campaign resources can also help with patients. This is not a 'once and done' communication. Health care professionals and patients have an ongoing relationship. That can create trust result in optimal health interventions and outcomes.



The Vanguard Network catalyzes high performance with leaders and their organizations.

Global Vaccination Advisors helps identify and leverage the underlying attitudinal and emotional drivers and barriers to COVID-19 vaccination



Global Vaccination Advisors

How can organizations use your materials?

We have resources that organizations can use as they are, or as they should be adapted for their particular employee group or community. They can use them in any way they believe will help improve vaccination rates. That could mean making copies to distribute at churches, at their business, within community organizations or within their practice. It could also mean they use our materials to create an op ed for a local paper. Or it could mean posting our infographics in employee newsletters, in employee emails or on social media. If the organization has vaccine information outreach activities in the community, they can use our materials to help.

What if organizations need something not included in the *Health Champions Campaign* materials?

If they do, we'd like to know. We want them to reach out to us. We may be able to help meet that special need. In some cases, we'll know about other material that is ready to use. In other cases, we may be able to co-develop it with them or for them.

We are eager to support leaders in their efforts. We know they do important work.

Businesses are important anchors for promoting sustainable community health and we would like to support them in efforts to educate their employees, customers, and members of their communities about vaccine preventable diseases. We are eager to support leaders in their efforts. We know their organizations do important work. They are an important source of jobs and contribute to the economy. We want to help them with the tools we offer to address the important need to encourage vaccinations. This will help achieve vaccine equity and will help employees stay on the job and be productive.

Laura Lee Hall, PhD

Laura Lee Hall, PhD, is President of the Center for Sustainable Health Care has more than two decades of health advocacy, research, education, and quality improvement efforts. She held previous positions with the American College of Physicians, the American College of Cardiology, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill and the US Congress' Office of Technology Assessment.

Center for Sustainable Health Care

The mission of the [Center for Sustainable Health Care](#) is to support sustainable healthy communities, especially those with diverse and underserved populations, through the provision of actionable data, research, and engagement/training of clinicians and community leaders.

Center for Sustainable Health Care and Vaccine Confidence

The National Minority Quality Forum and the Center for Sustainable Health Care produced the [Health Champions Tool Kit](#) with downloadable social media materials, celebrity video endorsements, infographics, and other resources in both English and Spanish. The tool kit was developed in collaboration with Black and Spanish-speaking communities and is suitable for use by non-medical community members and leaders.



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