



# Covid-19 Vaccination Role Play

## What is it?

Role play can be used with a person who finds new or unfamiliar situations stressful. It helps people understand what is expected of them and what their 'role' in the situation is.

Role play can assist people who are anxious about the COVID-19 vaccination by helping them become familiar with the vaccination process.

## What you will need

- Standardised PPE e.g., gloves, mask, visor and apron (If this isn't available don't worry the role play will still be effective)
- A box to hold items in
- Wet wipes or similar
- A needle-less syringe (a retractable pen is also a good alternative)
- Cotton ball
- Band-aid

## What to do

1. Ask the person to sit on a chair and explain what it is you're doing.
2. Introduce yourself and ask some pre injection questions e.g., what's your name, date of birth etc. (for details of the types of questions likely to be asked see below).
3. Stand to the side of the person (if it's available wear PPE gear as described above).
4. Ask the person to roll up their sleeve, initially you may need to model this.
5. Ask the person to make their arm floppy.
6. Lightly wipe the area of skin where the vaccine will be applied with a cool wet wipe
7. Let the person know that they are going to administer the vaccine now.
8. Suggest that the person looks away if they prefer and to count to three or use some form of distraction.
9. It is likely that you may not have a syringe so instead use a pen or your finger (make it clear that in real life it will be a syringe – you could show a photo of one). Press this object against the person's skin on their upper arm holding for 3-5 seconds.
10. Place a small Band-Aid on the area.
11. Tell the person how well they did and thank them for practicing.

*\* If the person becomes distressed, anxious or indicates they want to stop do so. Provide reassurance, praise and the opportunity to practice again when they are ready.*

*\* You might use a simple script to support the role play and repeat this same script when the person is at the appointment, having the injection e.g. "Sleeve up", "Sit still", "Don't look", "Injection".*

### Some Tips

- Some people may find reading a 'social script' before doing their role play useful, this can also be built into a step on the day, reading the social script then going in.
- Depending on the abilities of the person, it could be useful for them to watch the whole 'play' from start to finish before taking part, making sure they know who is playing 'them' so they can see what will be expected of them.
- Some people may require some prompting, such as guiding to the seat, helping roll up sleeve, turning their head gently if some of these instructions are feeling new to them.
- Keep the language you use clear and consistent each time, this will help the person build familiarity with the sequence quickly.
- Where appropriate, some people may find exploring the equipment box useful to familiarise themselves with the items if they are very unfamiliar to them.
- Some people may find having the role play filmed so they can watch and see themselves being successful at completing this sequence useful. This can be watched as much as they require and even be available to them on the day if they need some support with what to do in the moment.



### Questions you are likely to be asked before receiving the vaccination

- Are you currently unwell?
- Have you previously had a very severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis to anything including previous vaccinations?
- Have you already had a COVID vaccine?
- Have you had any vaccines in the past four weeks?
- Are you taking any of these medications: Nivolumab (Opdivo), Pembrolizumab (Keytruda), Atezolizumab (Tecentriq) or Ipilimumab (Yervoy) which are prescribed by a cancer specialist [oncologist] that stimulate your immune system to treat a cancer? Or have done so in the past six months?
- Are you pregnant or breast feeding?
- Are you taking a blood thinning medication or have a bleeding disorder?