Access to COVID-19 Vaccines: Issues and Barriers for Persons with Disabilities

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Andy Imparato, Disability Rights California
Nancy Horton, Mid-Atlantic ADA Center

Vaccine Access
ADA Basics

Nancy Horton, Mid-Atlantic ADA Center
The Basics

• Physical access to vaccination sites and facilities
• Effective communication
• Digital access (websites for information, appointments, etc.)
• Reasonable policy modifications
• Beyond the ADA – community access issues

Sites and Facilities: Title II

• **Program accessibility**
  • Not all vaccination sites need to be accessible, BUT if not all are accessible:
    • A reasonable number of comparable sites must be accessible
    • Information about which sites are accessible should be readily available to the public
Sites and Facilities: Title III

• Existing buildings are subject to requirements to remove barriers when readily achievable
  • All existing buildings may not be accessible

Sites and Facilities: Temporary Facilities

• Title II and Title III
  • Services provided in temporary or mobile facilities are covered
Effective Communication

• Auxiliary aids and services may be needed to ensure effective communication with individuals who have vision, hearing, or speech disabilities
  • For example, exchanging notes/using whiteboards, assistive listening devices, amplification or speech-to-text apps, printed materials, accessible digital information
• Telephone systems used to get information or make appointments must be effective for individuals using telecommunications relay services (TRS)

Digital Access

• Access to websites and mobile apps to find information, make appointments, etc.
  • Effective communication for people with hearing or vision disabilities (websites compatible with assistive technologies used by many people who are blind or have low vision, captioned videos, etc.)
  • Design features and compatibility with assistive technologies used by people with disabilities that affect mobility or dexterity (input other than mouse, time-out features, etc.)
  • Low flash rates (or no flashing elements)
  • Simple designs with plain language
Reasonable Modifications

• Examples:
  • Adjusting communication methods to accommodate individuals with intellectual, developmental, or cognitive disabilities
  • Admitting service animals
  • Providing seating to accommodate individuals who have difficulty standing for long periods of time

Connecting with Communities

• Things to consider:
  • How will people learn about vaccination options?
    • Use multiple methods, languages to reach out
  • How will people get to vaccination sites?
    • Consider proximity to public transit where available, as well as other options (collaborations, volunteer programs)
  • Will any sites be able to accommodate individuals who may need to lie down, or who cannot wear face masks?
Vaccine Barriers and Access Issues
Andy Imparato, Disability Rights California

QUESTIONS
Resources

• North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
  • Hearing Loss Communication Guides (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/materials-resources/hearing-loss-communication-guides)

• Johns Hopkins Medicine

More Resources

  • ADA National Network (https://adata.org/)
Next Session:
Tuesday, April 6, 2021

Special Session: What You Need to Know about the
Justice Department Settlement Agreement with
Amtrak

Registration available at: www.ada-audio.org
Next Session:
Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Access to Federal Facilities and the Role of the General Services Administration (GSA)

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