Narrative Description

Covid-19 vaccination clinics are commonplace at this point during the pandemic, but in May-June of 2021, there were still high levels of vaccine hesitancy. Dr. Henry, a pharmacist at CVS, as well as a preceptor for students on IPPE and APPE rotations, provided opportunities to her students to travel to various Covid-19 vaccine clinics, many of which were in rural, low-income communities with patients experiencing language barriers. This not only allowed for the students to practice vaccinating, but it also provided an opportunity for the students to counsel the patients on what to expect from the vaccine as far as side effects and address any issues surrounding vaccine hesitancy.

During many of these clinics, the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy partnered with the College of Public Health and through a collaborative mobile health unit, faculty, students, and volunteers were able to provide efficient and effective vaccination services, all while creating a healthier community and protecting as many people as possible from coronavirus. There were plenty of Spanish interpreters at each clinic, and, considering that 31% of Arizona’s population is Hispanic, this allowed for a more comfortable and relaxed experience for the patients receiving vaccinations. Through this interprofessional teamwork, the environment created for the patients was one that was warm, welcoming, and safe.

While some of these clinics may not have had a large outcome, such as the popular drive-through clinics, Dr. Henry, her students, and volunteers from both colleges were able to travel to the patient rather than expecting the patient to travel to the provider. One specific example of this was a vaccination clinic that took place at Hickman’s Egg Farm. Bringing the Covid-19 vaccination clinic to the patient allowed for the patient to worry less about taking time out of his or her day, or worse, taking a whole day off work, to go get the vaccine. Instead, the patient was able to just take 20-30 minutes out of his or her workday to go get the vaccine and then promptly return to work.

Although this story does pertain to vaccinating the public against Covid-19, the teamwork used, and the effort put in to creating a friendly environment can be something to strive for at any communal location when healthcare providers are interacting with the public. Effective counseling, whether it be for a patient picking up a new prescription, or, in this case, answering questions about a vaccine, is an essential skill to have and be able to practice whenever possible. This will allow for a healthier and safer community overall and create trusted patient-provider relationships.

Description of the pharmacy practice

The location of Hickman’s Egg Farm is in Arlington, AZ, which is a town estimated to have a population of only 160. Its employees travel from outside of this small town from the surrounding towns and cities. While the population is 55% white, the remaining 45% of the population is Hispanic. The per capita income is estimated to be $30,834 on average. About 59% of the household income in this area is under $50k.
The larger, surrounding city of Buckeye has somewhat similar characteristics. However, the most common race is the Hispanic population at 48%. The per capita income is $27,643 and the mean travel time to work is over 30 minutes.

Factors in AZ that support this level of care, as applicable

The Arizona Medical Association has an entire page on their website embedded with links ranging from information about the Covid-19 vaccine itself, to how telemedicine could be a new and viable option for patients who are still hesitant to go into public, to the advocacy efforts Arizona physicians have done during Covid-19, to finally, the latest news and guidelines about the virus. This website is one of many websites that provide crucial and pertinent information to the public not only about the virus and the vaccine itself, but also how and what healthcare professionals are doing on their end to ensure the public is as safe and protected as possible.