Twitter Thread by Rhea Boyd MD, MPH



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Last week I spoke to over 5000 people in rural Georgia. Most were not vaccinated because they still had questions. EVERY question they asked was legitimate and important.

Stop telling people to “just get vaccinated” if you aren’t willing to put in the work to help them do it.

That “work” is MUCH more high touch than spouting condescension online.

“The unvaccinated” are not a monolith of defectors. They are people our health care system has long underserved - Black folks, rural folks, un and un/under insured folks and young folks.

That work requires daily acts to dispel and decrease the rampant disinformation people are contending with. It requires laws that prevent media organizations from willfully distributing disinformation about science during a pandemic when peoples lives depend on vaccine science.

That work requires interventions that can successfully vaccinate groups NOT individuals - like households, schools, churches work places - so that the protection of vaccination is SHARED among those most likely to encounter each other. Remember, vaccines protect you AND others.

That work requires incentives to vaccinate that begin locally, not trickle down from above. A lot of people are not aware of the large federal programs available to them. But they know their child care provider or grocery store attendant or neighbor - THEY are the influencers.

We have to equip people with the tools to protect themselves and others. The most important of those tools are credible information about the power and safety of the COVID vaccines and the benefits of masking and distancing for EVERYONE regardless of vaccination status.

Lastly, people have questions both before AND after vaccination. We have to follow up and answer those questions because each person who chooses vaccination is a powerful influencer for their family and networks. Affirming their experience is how we reach everyone in the nation.