

From 1 November the entire AJP website is restricted to registered users only | Already registered? [Login & stay in](#) | Yet to join? [Register here](#)

BUSINESS CLASS COLUMNS

MOVING FORWARD

 GUEST AUTHOR 28/11/2021



Participation in the COVID-19 vax program created workflow issues for many pharmacies. Jenny Blair from The Next Level says the forward pharmacy model is a solution to the problem

As so many pharmacies took up the opportunity to participate in the Covid-19 vaccination rollout many were faced with new dilemmas related to workflow and how to encourage vaccine-hesitant customers to take up the offer.

Jenny Blair, The Next Level's Lead Pharmacist, shares her experiences from the frontline.....

Like so many other pharmacists across the country I undertook to upgrade my qualifications early in 2021 to become a pharmacist immuniser and was disappointed when the Covid-19 vaccine rollout into pharmacies was delayed.



LISTEN + LEARN



Menopause: a patient-centred approach

This two-part CPD podcast provides an overview of key aspects related to perimenopause and menopause and the importance of taking a patient-centred approach in the management of symptoms

CPD podcasts at **AJP.com.au/cpd**

I did a few flu vaccinations and used my sons as guinea pigs as I perfected my injection technique. We prepared an online booking system and fielded questions about when we would have vaccines and which vaccine we would have.

Then began the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine rollout and we were inundated with questions (and questionable views) from customers, both in person and via the phone. This was where having a “forward pharmacist” approach came into its own. Taking the time for a pharmacist to have a conversation with a vaccine-hesitant customer (and sometimes several conversations) was much more likely to get a conversion than a simple offer from an assistant, no matter how informed.

Talking about the relative risk factors of their age and underlying conditions vs the risks of different vaccines and of Covid-19 itself put things in perspective.

Workflow changes also had to be made. Our scheduled times for preparation and checking of DAAs had to be changed as we found the Covid-19 vaccination process so much more time-consuming than a flu vaccine. The staff had to incorporate 2nd dose bookings into their routines whilst keeping an eye on impatient customers who wanted to leave before their 15 minutes was up, monitoring Covid app check-ins and regular sanitizing.

We also noticed that word of mouth from other customers is a powerful influencer. On many occasions customers seated for their post-vaccination 15 minutes in the waiting area encouraged other customers in the pharmacy to get the jab, telling them about their positive experiences!

We then prepared for the Moderna rollout, altering our booking system, fielding more questions and increasing our vaccination days to accommodate the increased numbers expected. We also adapted our processes and documentation to ensure no errors would be made.

When we were a few days in to our Moderna experience, bookings had jumped, we experienced our first fainting episode and we continued to monitor demand and increase available appointment numbers to ensure minimal wastage.

It has been an interesting and exciting time in community pharmacy and the forward pharmacist is being rewarded.

Glenn Guilfoyle is principal of The Next Level. Click [here](#) or call 0418 519 755

Previous

The week in review

Next

Finding pharmacy's innovators

Related Posts



Community pharmacists begin COVID jabs



'Saving and sustaining lives'



Vaccine safe in pharmacists' 'very, very cold' hands

