



Homelessness and Vaccine Miseducation

As vaccine doses become more available, more and more vaccines are being administered in the United States. These vaccines are being offered to homeless populations, but many of these individuals are not accepting the vaccine. This exposes the large issue of vaccine miseducation that is prevalent in homeless shelters.

Currently the vaccines administered in the United States are being given in stages that delineate higher-risk and lower risk populations. Higher-risk populations, such as older individuals or people with pre-existing diseases, are being vaccinated before the rest of the country's population. These prioritized individuals include those who are affected by homelessness. Since homeless people do not have the same level of healthcare available to them as other Americans, it is vital that they receive priority and get vaccinated as early as possible.

It is very significant that homeless populations are getting the attention that they deserve and require, but an issue still arises: many homeless individuals are refusing to take a vaccine dose. More than half of the people staying in a [homeless shelter in Bloomington](#), for example, refused to take the vaccine. Many of these individuals refused due to previous bad healthcare experiences they had had. Others did not trust the healthcare system or the vaccine.

This shows that more education needs to be offered to these populations. Not only should these individuals receive multiple tools explaining the vaccination process and the importance of vaccination, but it is also important that vaccine educators build rapport with the homeless populations they are trying to reach out to. As Erik Zdansky, [the program manager for homeless services at Bloomington, stated](#), people affected by homelessness need more than just vaccine education, they also need relationships filled with compassion and understanding.

By Nicole Alesso