

# Promoting Uptake of COVID-19, Influenza, and RSV Vaccines for Fall 2023

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

## Purpose

Fall 2023 marks the first time that vaccines for three respiratory illnesses—COVID-19, seasonal influenza (flu), and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)—will be available simultaneously. If taken, these vaccines can mitigate increases in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths that could strain the healthcare system, negatively impact the economy, and add to stress for individuals and families over the coming months. Success in promoting uptake in Fall 2023 will likely come from addressing complex challenges, including public awareness, and understanding of the three vaccines, people's motivations to get vaccinated, and vaccine accessibility.

**Join our webinar to learn strategies from the social and behavioral sciences to promote vaccine uptake for Fall 2023 and ensure vaccine accessibility.**

3:00–3:05 pm

## Welcome and Introductions

Emily Brunson, Texas State University

3:05–3:29 pm

## Stage Setting

- *Current Context*: Pragna Patel, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- *Key Communication Strategies for Fall 2023*: Kasisomayajula Viswanath, Harvard University
- *Strategies for Overcoming Accessibility Challenges*: Alexander Rothman, University of Minnesota

3:29–3:58 pm

## Moderated Discussion

Emily Brunson, Texas State University

3:58–4:00 pm

## Closing Reflections

Emily Brunson, Texas State University

## **PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Emily Brunson**

Emily Brunson is a medical anthropologist. She received an MPH in epidemiology and a PhD in anthropology from the University of Washington. Currently Dr. Brunson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Texas State University. Her primary research focus is health care access and decision-making, and particularly how policies, social structures (including class and racial inequalities), social networks and personal experience combine to produce health outcomes for individuals. Currently, Dr. Brunson is co-leading CommuniVax, a national coalition to strengthen the role and involvement of local Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities in an equitable COVID-19 vaccination campaign. She is also actively engaged in research on COVID-19 vaccination among college students and in efforts promoting minority students' opportunities for research experiences and professional training.

### **Pragna Patel**

Dr. Pragna Patel is a physician and epidemiologist with over 25 years of experience in the practice of medicine and public health combined. She is currently the Chief Medical Officer of CDC's Coronavirus and Other Respiratory Viruses Division. On CDC's COVID-19 Response, she served as Chief Medical Officer, Principal Deputy Incident Manager, and led teams to answer inquiries, to develop guidance, to understand clinical manifestations of COVID-19, specifically hyperinflammatory syndromes. In 2021, she was the Associate Editor (AE) of CDC's Science Updates which provides a summary of the current COVID-19 literature and are disseminated widely. She also developed and served as the AE of the Daily Updates to the CDC Director as well as Senior Advisor and Special Studies Lead on the International Taskforce. Most recently, she was employed as a Senior Medical and Science Advisor for the Global Health Center, HIV Prevention Branch where she advises on clinical issues and biomedical interventions, such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), relevant to adolescent girls and young women and DREAMS. She founded and co-led the PEPFAR interagency PrEP community of practice and is a member of the WHO Global PrEP Coalition. Dr. Patel has co-authored over 120 manuscripts and two book chapters. Over the years, Dr. Patel has mentored numerous fellows, students, and junior staff. Since 2004, Dr. Patel has provided clinical care to HIV-infected adults at the Infectious Diseases Clinic at the Atlanta VA Medical Center. She earned a BA in Mathematics from Binghamton University in three years and completed the Post-baccalaureate Premedical Program at Columbia University. She received her medical degree from the State University of New York, Brooklyn and fulfilled her Internal Medicine residency training at Brown University.

### **Alex Rothman**

Alex Rothman is a Distinguished University Teaching Professor, Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota. He has occupied numerous leadership roles, including Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs at the University of Minnesota and President of the Society for Health Psychology. Recognized for his contributions to Health Psychology, he is a fellow of multiple esteemed societies and has received awards including the APA 2002 Distinguished Scientific Award and the University of Minnesota's award for Outstanding Contributions to Graduate and Professional Education. He was also inducted into the Academy of Distinguished Teachers and named a Distinguished University Teaching Professor in 2018. His primary research program revolves around the utilization of social psychological theory for illness prevention and health promotion, synthesizing basic research on people's interaction with and response to health information and developing and evaluating theory-based interventions to encourage healthy behavior. Engaging with a diverse range of issues, he, along with his colleagues, delve into the evaluation and processing of health-relevant information, effectiveness of different health communication strategies, decision processes behind behavior change initiation and maintenance, and the mechanisms underlying the effectiveness of behavioral interventions.

### **Kasisomayajula Viswanath**

Kasisomayajula "Vish" Viswanath is Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH) and in the

McGraw-Patterson Center for Population Sciences at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI). He is also the Faculty Director of the Health Communication Core of the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center (DF/HCC). Other additional administrative and scientific leadership positions held by Dr. Viswanath include: Director of the Center for Translational Communication Science, DFCI/Harvard Chan; Co-Director, Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness, Harvard Chan; and, Director, Harvard Chan, India Research Center. He is the founding Director of DF/HCC's Enhancing Communications for Health Outcomes (ECHO) Laboratory. Dr. Viswanath's work, drawing from literatures in communication science, social epidemiology, and social and health behavior sciences, focuses on translational communication science to influence public health policy and practice. His primary research is in documenting the relationship between communication inequalities, poverty and health disparities, and knowledge translation to address health disparities. He has written more than 270 journal articles and book chapters concerning communication inequalities and health disparities, knowledge translation, public health communication campaigns, e-health and digital divide, public health preparedness and the delivery of health communication interventions to underserved populations. He is the author of *The First 1000 Days of Life: Lessons from Social and Behavior Change Communication* (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2021) and co-editor of four books and monographs: *Mass Media, Social Control and Social Change* (Iowa State University Press, 1999), *Health Behavior: Theory, Research & Practice* (Jossey Bass, 2015), *The Role of Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use* (National Cancer Institute, 2008) and *A Socioecological Approach to Addressing Tobacco-Related Health Disparities* (National Cancer Institute, 2017). He was also the Editor of the Social and Behavioral Research section of the 12-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (Blackwell Publishing, 2008). Dr. Viswanath received his Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of Minnesota.