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Cite this as: *BMJ* 2021;375:n3027<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n3027>

Published: 07 December 2021

MANDATORY COVID VACCINATION FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Mandatory covid-19 vaccination for healthcare workers: vaccinated and unvaccinated people seem as likely to infect others

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Sokol's main argument for mandatory covid-19 vaccination of healthcare workers is that vaccination of patient facing healthcare workers protects patients.¹ The author makes this claim based on a health department study from Australia.²

A recent study in *Lancet Infectious Diseases* suggests, however, that those vaccinated who subsequently become infected are just as likely to infect those around them as unvaccinated people who develop covid.³ This does somewhat weaken the argument for mandatory vaccination of healthcare workers as a means of protecting patients.

The best way to protect patients is for all patient facing healthcare workers to have mandatory weekly testing. Demonstrating a lack of infection will surely provide better patient protection than a passport that indicates vaccination at some point in the past.

Competing interests: none declared.

- 1 Sokol D. Covid-19 vaccination should be mandatory for healthcare workers. *BMJ* 2021;375:n2670. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n2670 pmid: 34728499
- 2 Your unvaccinated friend is roughly 20 times more likely to give you covid. <https://theconversation.com/your-unvaccinated-friend-is-roughly-20-times-more-likely-to-give-you-covid-170448>.
- 3 Singanayagam A, Hakki S, Dunning J, et al. ATACC Study Investigators. Community transmission and viral load kinetics of the SARS-CoV-2 delta (B.1.617.2) variant in vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals in the UK: a prospective, longitudinal, cohort study. *Lancet Infect Dis* 2021;S1473-3099(21)00648-4. doi: 10.1016/S1473-3099(21)00648-4. pmid: 34756186

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