

# VACCINE HESITANCY THREATENS AN END TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Rising vaccine hesitancy is causing a longer and more difficult road to achieving global immunity.

The only way to save lives during the COVID-19 pandemic is through the rapid vaccination of a large proportion of the population. Although the vaccination roll-out is under way in most countries, vaccine uptake is slow.

Healthcare professionals are struggling with vaccine-hesitant individuals. Using scientific evidence, healthcare professionals aim to build vaccine confidence to increase COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

“Long-standing evidence of childhood and routine immunisations clearly shows that the benefits of vaccination far outweighs the risks of remaining unvaccinated,” says Velisha Perumal-Pillay.

Continuous vaccination against polio has resulted in the eradication of this life-threatening disease in South Africa, saving millions of lives. Recent evidence of the life-saving effect of the COVID-19 vaccine is highlighted in data from the USA and UK, showing decreased COVID-19-related deaths.

“These countries have vaccinated approximately half their adult population against COVID-19 and are lifting social restrictions. A return to a more normal life



Vaccine hesitancy hinders a return to normal life.

is possible for people in these countries, thanks to vaccination.”

Research shows that unvaccinated people are at risk of severe infection, hospitalisation and even possible death if they become infected with COVID-19.

Scientists are concerned that unvaccinated individuals could transmit dangerous new variants of the virus. This threatens the

well-being of children under 12 years old and people with medical or health conditions who cannot be vaccinated.

“Transmission of variants could potentially lead to more deadly waves of COVID-19 infection. Remaining unvaccinated threatens scientists’ and healthcare professionals’ attempts at blocking the spread of the virus through widespread vaccination.”

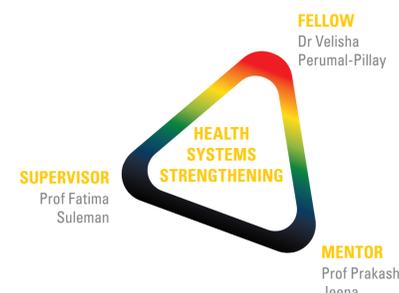


## Towards Research Leadership

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