A Healthcare Providers View: Taking the Covid Vaccine - A Selfish or Selfless Act?

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Abstract
Healthcare practitioners take an oath to do-no-harm to those we serve and help to protect against health illnesses. The Covid-19 virus is an illness that has potential deadly consequences. With the development of the Covid-19 vaccine there is new found hope against this deadly virus. Taking the vaccine is a personal choice but providers must weight their personal feelings against those sworn duties to help treat and protect the public and society at large. Taking the vaccine is a selfless act and one that upholds these health care values and principles to support neighbors, communities, and society as a whole.

Keywords
Covid-19, Covid vaccine, Health care practitioners, Occupational therapy, Hippocratic oath, Healthcare policies

Taking the covid vaccine is an act of moral courage and selflessness. Imagine being the very first person to roll up the sleeve and take the vaccine. As a healthcare provider who works closely with patients and other providers as part of the healthcare team, it is a moral and ethical duty to prioritize others’ welfare. Not to say that a provider's own self-care is not important but equally as important as others. The term “do-no-harm” refers to the Hippocratic oath that has long pointed to the healthcare community values and ethics [4]. Although updated to meet today's healthcare practice needs and society's changed values [4], many providers raise their hands to still recite the oath upon graduation from healthcare educational programs.

Further, in allied health care fields and in particular the field of occupational therapy (OT), practitioners pledge to support and abide by OT core values which include altruism [5]. Altruism is “demonstrating concern for the welfare of others” (AOTA, 2015, Core Values section) [5]. Occupational therapists strive to practice under the principles and standards of conduct of the OT healthcare field when addressing issues that can affect the patients I serve. The first OT principle is beneficence, which includes behaviors that “demonstrate a concern for the well-being and safety” of others (AOTA, 2015, Principles and Standards of Conduct section) [5]. Taking the covid vaccine is an act of selflessness and the right thing to do to help keep patients and co-workers safe.

Currently, there is no mandate from the U.S. government that requires healthcare providers (or anyone else for that matter) to take the covid vaccination despite the high rate of recorded transmissions of the
of being scoffed at by others who did not understand the health benefits versus disadvantages and expressed fears by some including those in the medical field and public arena. Standing up for higher values and beliefs takes courage and can bring on emotional unease [11]. However, believing it is never the wrong thing to do the right thing gives courage to overcome social fears. As practitioners work closely with vulnerable patients and are a part of healthcare teams across the nation, it is important to join millions of other Americans and take the vaccine. Taking the vaccine gives practitioners the tools and courage to have hard conversations with those providers who are hesitant to take the vaccine. Sharing personal experiences of the positive effects of the vaccine and advocating for its use among providers and co-workers will ultimately ensure the protection from the virus for us all. Taking the vaccine is a selfless act; not getting the vaccine is a selfish act. For many in the healthcare field, there is no question on the sacrifice and devotion to the health and welfare of others we are meant to serve and protect.

References