

Forceful vaccine messages backfire with holdouts – how can it be done better? | The Conversation

By S. Shyam Sundar

September 16, 2021

With the [FDA approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine](#) and the [continued surge of the delta variant](#), governments across the world have renewed their push to increase the number of vaccinated individuals by persuading the holdouts. On Sept. 9, 2021, [President Joe Biden announced](#) sweeping vaccine mandates, expressing frustration at the vaccine holdouts: “We’ve been patient, but our patience is wearing thin. And your refusal has cost all of us.”

As a [communication scientist](#) who has studied the effects of media and health campaigns for the past 30 years, I worry that a fevered pitch in vaccine messaging may make the holdouts even more resistant. The direct, blunt messages to go get vaccinated that worked on three-quarters of Americans may not work for the remaining one-quarter. If anything, they might backfire.

[...]

Source: [Forceful vaccine messages backfire with holdouts – how can it be done better?](#)