

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/clinicians-roundtable/ensuring-access-to-covid-19-vaccination-strategies-and-considerations/36419/>

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Ensuring Access to COVID-19 Vaccination: Strategies and Considerations

Announcer:

You're listening to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll hear from Dr. Nahid Bhadelia, who's an Associate Professor at the Boston University School of Medicine and the Founding Director of the Boston University Center on Emerging Infectious Diseases. She'll be discussing the importance of access to continued COVID-19 vaccination. Here's Dr. Bhadelia now.

Dr. Bhadelia:

After the COVID-19 public health emergency ended here in the United States, there were some bridge programs that allowed access to COVID-19 vaccines. Many of those are no longer available, so this free access to everyone no longer exists, which means that it's easier for folks to access those vaccines now only through doctors' offices, pharmacies. There are programs that may make it available for those without insurance at community health centers and vaccination clinics, but it's a bit more effort, right? So this idea of having to seek it out on your own and try to figure out your insurance company's coverage is now a shifted burden from what we had access to before under the public health emergency, which is everybody got access to free vaccines.

I think that we need to ensure that those that do not have access to insurance and COVID-19 vaccines through insurance, that there are still places that they can get no-cost vaccinations through public campaigns or through the Bridge Access Program that still exists. And the second part, the second thing that we want to do is to ensure that people who do have access to vaccines through their insurance, that the insurance companies are making that effort to make their policies up front and very clear so that patients are not scared to get vaccinated and then be stuck with a bill right at the end. We can leverage community partnerships and have more mobile access sites like we did during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the winter season where we know there might be the most number of cases. I think those are some of the ways that we can help bridge some of the gaps, but uninsured or underinsured programs or the big programs—I just want to underscore again it's the Bridge Access Program—provide free COVID-19 vaccines to those populations, at least through December 2025.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Nahid Bhadelia talking about how we can ensure access to COVID-19 vaccines. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!