Background and importance Vaccine hesitancy is one of the top 10 threats to global health according to the World Health Organization. A part of the Swiss population is hesitant to vaccinate against COVID-19.

Aim and objectives The aim of this study was to conduct a public health action with hesitant to vaccination and measure its impact on vaccine hesitancy and on vaccination rate.

Material and methods Vaccine hesitancy and barriers to vaccination were measured and identified using a pre-test questionnaire. Only non-vaccinated volunteer participants were included, and they were invited to a 1-hour online session using motivational interviewing techniques, animated by a physician and a pharmacist. Two weeks after the session, they were asked to fill a post-test and 2 months later, their vaccine status was requested. Data collection was conducted from April to August 2021.

Results 31 adults participated for a total of 11 online sessions (2.8 participants/session). Majority were women (68%, n=21) and aged between 35 and 60 years (71%). 10 (32.3%) were public health professionals and 21 (67.7%) were not. Prior to the study, 54.9% did not consider vaccines safe (19.4% post-study), 87.1% were concerned about vaccine side effects (64.5% post-study) and 51.6% considered vaccines to be effective (83.9% post-study). Before the study, participants were classified as certainly willing to vaccinate (3.2%), probably willing to vaccinate (83.9%) and 51.6% considered vaccines to be effective (56%). After the study, the confidence increased to 6.3 ± 2.4 (+29%).

Conclusion and relevance In this study we could reduce vaccine hesitancy by increasing the degree of confidence in the vaccine and our action effectively convinced half the participants to get vaccinated.

REFERENCES AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conflict of interest No conflict of interest