



The Commission's follow up to the Council conclusions on childhood immunisation

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Council conclusions on childhood immunisation

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Council conclusions on childhood immunisation: successes and challenges of European childhood immunisation and the way forward

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. RECALLS that under Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Union action is to complement national policies and be directed towards improving public health by covering in particular the fight against the major health scourges; it is also to encourage cooperation between the Member States in the field of public health and, if necessary, lend support to their action, and respect the responsibilities of the Member States for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care;
7. WELCOMES the outcomes of the expert level conference 'For a Healthy Future of Our Children — Childhood Immunisation', held in Budapest on 3-4 March 2011, where participants examined successes and challenges of childhood immunisation in the European Union and underlined the need to achieve and maintain timely, high childhood immunisation coverage in both general and under-vaccinated populations; having quality data for monitoring coverage and surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases at sub-national, national and EU levels; and co-ordinating and refining communication strategies to target under-vaccinated population groups or those who are sceptical about the benefits of vaccination;

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation

- Adopted by the Health Ministers of the EU Member States in **June 2011** under the leadership of the **Hungarian Presidency**
- Recognise that – while childhood immunisation is the responsibility of individual Member States – there is **added value in addressing childhood immunisation at EU level**
- Invite the **Member States and the Commission to take various actions** to strengthen childhood immunisation

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation

- Invite the **Commission** to examine with the **ECDC** and **EMA**, in close collaboration with **WHO**, options to:
- identify commonly agreed guidance and methodologies for **improving vaccination coverage**
- identify commonly agreed methodologies for **monitoring and assessing vaccination coverage** and real level of protection
- identify methodologies for **monitoring of public support** for vaccination programmes
- facilitate the development and implementation of **communication strategies aimed at vaccination sceptics**
- provide guidelines and tools to help Member States to **design efficient communication messages**

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation

- Invite the **Commission** to examine with the **ECDC** and **EMA**, in close collaboration with **WHO**, options to (*cont'd*):
- develop **multilingual EU vaccination resources** for **health care professionals** and the **public** with the aim to provide objective, easily accessible (web and/or paper based) and evidence-based information on **vaccines and immunisation schedules including vaccines used** in the Member States
- facilitate regional and EU-wide projects for increasing access to vaccination for **transnational under-vaccinated groups**

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (1)

- identify commonly agreed guidance and methodologies for **improving vaccination coverage**
- The Commission discussed the need to improve vaccination coverage – including possible measures – with Member States via the **Health Security Committee** and the **Early Warning and Response Network Committee**
- A **taskforce** consisting of DG Health & Consumers, DG Research, ECDC and EMA was established to create a **platform for discussing vaccine/vaccination issues** between all relevant stakeholders in EU institutions
- ECDC developed various **guidance documents** (e.g. update to 'Introduction of HPV vaccines in European Union countries', Scientific panel on childhood immunisation schedule: Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP) vaccination)

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (2)

- identify commonly agreed methodologies for **monitoring and assessing vaccination coverage** and **real level of protection in the community**
- Through the Health Programme, the Commission funded a **European conference on Immunisation Information Systems** (ECIIS, 7-8 Dec 2010). Immunisation Information Systems are key tools to monitor and assess vaccination coverage.
<http://www.smi.se/eciis>
- **Monitoring of vaccination coverage** will be strengthened via the '**Vaccine European New Integrated Collaboration Effort**' (**VENICE**) network, originally funded by the Health Programme and currently funded by ECDC

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (3)

- **communication** (awareness raising; monitoring public support; communication strategies towards vaccine sceptics; guidelines and tools to design efficient communication messages)
 - The Commission and ECDC advocated the **European Immunisation Week** (annual awareness raising initiative by WHO Euro) on their websites
 - ECDC met in May 2012 with the **Standing Committee of European Doctors** to discuss ways to strengthen **the role of healthcare professionals in advocating vaccination**



Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (4)

- **communication** (awareness raising; monitoring public support; communication strategies towards vaccine sceptics; guidelines and tools to design efficient communication messages)
- **Euro 2012 football games:** large measles outbreak in Ukraine ⇒ the Commission teamed up with UEFA: Euro 2012 home page linked to Commission page where football fans were urged to ensure that they were immunised before travelling
- ECDC **guidance on communication** on vaccination (e.g. Communication on immunisation – building trust; Conducting health communication activities on MMR vaccination)



Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (5)

- **communication** (awareness raising; monitoring public support; communication strategies towards vaccine sceptics; guidelines and tools to design efficient communication messages)
- The Commission raised awareness on measles with stakeholders at the **EU Health Policy Forum** meeting in May 2012
- The Commission devoted its **Health-EU Newsletter** of 4 Oct 2012 to vaccination



Childhood immunisation: safe and effective prevention

By Herta Adam, Health Threats Unit, European Commission, DG Health and Consumers

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (6)

- **multilingual EU vaccination resources** for healthcare professionals and the public with info on vaccines and immunisation schedules including vaccines used
- **EUVAC.NET**: overview of immunisation schedules in the Member States; initiated by the EUVAC.NET project funded by the Health Programme and continued by ECDC.
(<http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/euvac/schedules/Pages/schedules.aspx>) This info should be linked to vaccines used in the different schedules
- **EudraPharm**: EMA database on all medicinal products that have been authorised in the EU and the EEA. (<http://eudrapharm.eu>) Not complete (further work needed on entry of data, validation of data, ...)

Council conclusions on childhood immunisation – follow up (7)

- **increase access to vaccination for underserved populations**
- The Commission is funding via the Health Programme the **PROMOVAX** project, which aims at promoting vaccination among migrant populations in Europe (<http://www.promovax.eu>)
- The Commission adopted in May 2012 a **Commission Communication on National Roma Integration Strategies** in which it highlighted the need to strengthen vaccination
- ECDC organised in Sept 2012 a meeting to **discuss with NGOs, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders how to improve access to vaccination for underserved populations**

Conclusions

- **A lot has been achieved** since the adoption of the Council Conclusions on childhood immunisation mid 2011
- Improving childhood immunisation is a **long term challenge, and a lot still needs to be done.**
- The outcome of the discussions at this conference will help guide the Commission and the Member States in **defining the future priority areas** for achieving added-value through **co-ordinated EU level action on childhood immunisation.**





Thank you for your attention



Commission web page on vaccination:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/policy/index_en.htm

Conference web page:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/events/ev_20121016_en.htm