Human Papillomavirus Vaccination in São Paulo: Perceptions and Implementation
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Background

- Persistent infections by HPV-16 and HPV-18 account for 70% of cervical cancer cases.
- Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer for females in Brazil.
- Brazil’s National Immunization Program (PNI) is part of the Unified Health System (SUS).

Project Background

- Introduction of HPV vaccine into immunization programs has had mixed success around the world and the interplay of factors affecting the acceptability of the vaccine are not fully understood.
- In July 2013, Brazil announced the official inclusion of HPV vaccine in the National Immunization Program (PNI, in Portuguese) for adolescent girls and in March 2014 the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with state and municipal governments, launched a national campaign to vaccinate all girls ages 11-13 years old against HPV.
- The first dose rates surpassed target of 80% coverage
  - Nationwide, 87% of eligible adolescent girls received the first dose of HPV vaccine
  - State rates ranged from 81% to 99%
- Parents and health care professionals have been identified as key decision makers and influencers, respectively, of vaccination, but it is not clear what their role is in a national campaign in a country like Brazil with a historically strong record of immunization.

Objective

- To collect baseline information about implementation and acceptability of the national immunization campaign against HPV at public health clinics in the largest city in Brazil, São Paulo.

Methodology

- Conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with a random sample of parents of girls ages 9 to 13 years
- Collected 201 self-administered questionnaires from all healthcare professionals who had contact with patients at each health clinic, including: physicians, nurses, nursing support staff, and community health agents
- Interviews transcribed by ExpressScribeData and analyzed using MAXQDA Software. Survey portion of qualitative instrument analyzed using SPSS.
- Quantitative data analyzed using SAS

Field Challenges and Accomplishments

- Unanticipated delays in the Brazilian IRB review at university and municipal level resulted in unanticipated delays to data collection
- Initial data targets were achieved in spite of these delays
- Establishment of strong community and institutional partnerships which will ensure ongoing collaborative research
- Drafted and submitted a journal article for publication to the Pan American Journal of Public Health special issue on Women’s Health in Latin America (currently under review)

Next Steps

- Complete in-depth data analysis for three individual theses
- Produce a report for the 5 UBSs and University of São Paulo, School of Medicine
- Data to be used in a WHO/PAHO case study on Rights Based Approaches to Health for Policy Making and Programmatic Implementation

Project Partners

- University of São Paulo, School of Medicine
- Institute of Cancer of São Paulo
- INCT-HPV
- Emory Global Health Institute

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