

Influenza vaccination motivators among healthcare personnel

Vaccinating healthcare personnel (HCP) against influenza is important to prevent transmission and morbidity among patients and staff. We conducted an online survey assessing knowledge, perceptions and attitudes concerning influenza vaccination among HCP. Multivariate logistic regression was performed to identify independent predictors of vaccination. The survey was completed by 468 HCP representing all categories of staff. Doctors believed that vaccination was the best way to prevent influenza and perceived the vaccine less harmful as compared to nurses and allied health professionals. Getting vaccinated was associated with a greater likelihood of recommending vaccination to patients: 86% vs. 54% in vaccinated and unvaccinated HCP, respectively. Reasons for vaccine refusal were fear of needles (19%); fear of side effects (66%) and lack of time (16%). In the multivariate analysis, survey items that were independently associated with vaccination were beliefs that: vaccine effectively prevents influenza (OR 4.07 95% CI 2.51, 6.58); HCP are at increased risk of influenza (OR 2.82 95% CI 1.56, 5.13); vaccine can cause influenza (OR 0.41 95% CI 0.25, 0.65); contracting influenza is likely in the absence of vaccination (OR 1.96 95% CI 1.12, 3.42); and that HCP might transmit influenza to their family (OR 4.54 95% CI 1.38, 14.97). The belief that HCP might transmit influenza to patients was not independently associated with vaccine uptake. In conclusion, our study revealed misconceptions and knowledge gaps concerning the risk of influenza and the influenza vaccine. There were significant differences in knowledge and attitudes between healthcare professions. HCP decline vaccination because they do not perceive a personal risk of influenza infection and are concerned about side effects. Thus, in order to increase vaccination rates, it is important to educate HCP to correct misconceptions concerning vaccine efficacy and safety, while promoting the benefit of getting vaccinated in order to protect themselves and their families.