

CASE STUDY COMPETITION

Background: Few people associate infection with cancer, but nearly one-fifth of all cancers in the world are caused by infectious agents, including viruses and bacteria. Among the most important infections associated with cancers are human papillomaviruses (HPVs) which can cause most cervical and anal cancers as well as a fraction of oral cancers. Vaccination is highly effective in preventing infection with the HPV types that cause the majority of cervical cancers. Despite this, cervical cancer remains one of the largest public health problems of our time, being the 4th most frequent forms of cancer in women worldwide and being responsible for 26'000 deaths every year in Europe alone. The WHO Global Strategy for the Acceleration of the Elimination of Cervical Cancer sets the ambitious goal of vaccinating at least 90% of the target population of girls and to significantly increase the vaccination of boys by 2030.

Problem: Vaccination acceptance is critical to ensuring the achievement of the WHO Global Strategy's goals. There are numerous barriers to the success of HPV immunization programmes. Studies have shown that HPV knowledge are still moderate and vary widely between European countries and that percentages of HPV vaccination acceptance are also quite modest. Safety concerns are still the main barrier to vaccination, and lack of HPV and vaccine knowledge has been identified in the European population, which is even greater for male vaccination.

Task: Participants are asked to use their knowledge and research skills to identify barriers to HPV immunization in their national or local setting. What is the level of knowledge of HPV and HPV immunisation in the population? Are there any particular cultural or societal constraints impacting HPV vaccine uptake? What are the main safety and efficacy concerns regarding HPV vaccination in the population or in a specific subgroup of the population? Participants should then outline a potential intervention to overcome the barrier identified and promote HPV vaccination in their local setting.

The submission should be structured as follows:

- Background on the burden of HPV and uptake of HPV vaccination in their national or local setting (max 200 words or 2 slides).
- Identification and description of main barriers to HPV immunization in the national or local setting (max 400 words or 3 slides).
- Description of an intervention to tackle the barriers to immunization (max 400 words or 3 slides).

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