

REVIEWER COMMENTS

TITLE: Timeliness and out-of-sequence vaccination among young children in Burkina Faso-Analysis of health and demographic surveillance system (HDSS) data

The authors studied the timeliness of receipt of vaccines and out-of –sequence vaccination among children in Burkina Faso. They found high rates of timeliness for vaccines recommended at birth with lower rates of timeliness for latter vaccines. The rates of out-of-sequence vaccinations were low.

Timeliness of vaccination and out-of-sequence vaccinations are important aspects of immunization that have not receives as much attention as they ought to in sub –saharan Africa.

Specific comments

Abstract: well written

Introduction : well written. Few errors observed as follows-

Line 34 “said” should replace “accused”

Line 42 Start the with “Although high vaccination.....” Insert “,” after years and then delete” However “ at the beginning of the next sentence on line 43 so it reads as one sentence.

Line 45 “using” should replace “through”

Statistical Analysis

Is it possible that those excluded represent a population of children who may be significantly different in terms of demographic and vaccination characteristics?

What efforts were made (for example revisiting households to get information on children whose parents/caregivers were not available to provide immunization cards?

Line 83 References 23,25 and 27 did consider too early administration of antigens and provided information on the proportion of their study population who

received immunization too early. Thus the statement “most of them do not consider the possibility of a too early administration of antigens” is not strictly correct.

Line 85 “received more than three days before” should replace “received up to four days before”

RESULTS

Line 124-126 Is it possible that the finding stated here may be due to selection bias vis-à-vis if immunization cards of younger children were the most available? Children who most recently received immunizations are more likely to have cards than a four and a half year old whose last immunization was 3 years ago. Perhaps the authors should provide information on the mean age and age distribution of the children studied.

Lines 131 and 132 BCG and OPV0 should be received at the same time what is the explanation the difference in mean ages at receipt of these vaccines?

Lines 147and 149 “Approximately” should replace “roughly”

DISCUSSION

Line 234 Is the improvement in low income countries or in Burkina Faso?

Lines 236-242 Are there any reasons for the observations contained in this paragraph? Authors should compare their findings with those of studies where early vaccinations were studied.

Line 250 “comparatively” should replace “in this regard it is reassuring”

Line 251 delete “that”

Line 250-252 Is there a previous study from Burkina Faso on correct sequencing to which this study is being compared to? If there is please insert the reference and state by what proportion correct sequencing has improved and over what period of time.

Authors should speculate on the possible reasons for out-of-sequencing vaccinations. How is immunization provided in the study area? Is it by outreach? If by outreach how frequent are the outreaches?

One of the reasons for giving vaccines out –of–sequence (giving earlier vaccines along with latter vaccines) is as a strategy to reduce missed immunization opportunities. The authors should provide a balanced argument on these two view points

- 1) Avoiding missed opportunities which leads to out –of –sequence vaccinations
- 2) Avoiding out-of-sequence immunizations to reduce adverse events
What is the relative magnitude of adverse events compared to possible morbidity and mortality that may result a) from delayed immunization if the schedule is followed strictly in children who present later than recommended ages for various immunizations b) in those who do not subsequently return for immunizations (missed opportunities)

Line 375 should read “ Sadoh AE, Eregie CO

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