

Improving vaccine uptake in a vaccine-resistant cluster in Oregon

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PRESENTATION FORMAT: Oral Presentation

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public health professionals, maternal-child health care providers

ABSTRACT:

Background: Because of the near disappearance of some infectious diseases, parents are increasingly resisting vaccines because they believe the risks of vaccinating outweigh the benefits. Vaccine resistance has created clusters of under- and un-vaccinated children, including in Oregon. Parental attitudes toward the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine can be seen as a bellwether for overall vaccine acceptance, hesitancy, or rejection.

Purpose: One family practice clinic in Oregon where a number of parents had chosen not to vaccinate their children mounted a program aimed at improving uptake the MMR vaccine, to improve community immunity and offset the chance of an epidemic.

Methods: Parents of all children who did not receive the MMR vaccine (n = 23) were contacted by phone. The physician used targeted scripts to address the specific vaccine position, with the goal of persuading vaccine-objecting and ?hesitant parents to agree to the MMR vaccine for their children.

Results: Following the physician-parent conversations, several previous vaccine-hesitant or ?refusing parents (n = 6) accepted the MMR vaccine for their children (26% of all parents contacted).

Conclusion: This intervention provides proof-of-concept that a strategic, guided dialogue between a primary care physician and a vaccine-hesitant or ?refusing parent can move the parent toward vaccine acceptance.

OBJECTIVE(S): The presentation will demonstrate how a guided dialogue with a parent can help a physician shift parental attitudes toward vaccine acceptance.

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