
PS#66, 2006 - Pediatricians' Attitudes and Practices Surrounding the Delivery of Immunizations

(Part 4) – AAP as Vaccine Information Source

This survey was initiated by the former Committee on Community Health Services to explore issues surrounding immunizations, including members' opinion on the AAP as a source of new information on immunization issues. The survey was developed in cooperation with the National Immunization Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and findings will assist the AAP/CDC Childhood Immunization Support Program (CISP) in evaluating and promoting national immunization practices. PS#66 was funded by the DHHS, CDC, National Immunization Program as part of the CISP grant, #U66/CCU524285.

PS#66 also included questions on attitudes toward universal influenza immunization, practices regarding recently recommended vaccines, attitudes and practices regarding pediatricians' communication and documentation of vaccine risks/benefits, and adequacy of vaccine and administration cost reimbursement levels and related financing issues; these findings are reported in separate Executive Summaries. Selected findings from PS#66 were presented at the 2007 annual meeting of the Pediatric Academic Societies.

PS#66 was mailed to a random sample of 1620 non-retired U.S. members of the Academy. An original mailing and six follow-up mailings to recontact nonrespondents were conducted from July through November 2006; 852 questionnaires were received for a response rate of 53%. Analysis for this topic was limited to 629 pediatricians who provide patient care and offer age-appropriate immunizations to all or some of the children in their practice.

AAP Performance on Communicating New Information on Immunization Issues:

- A majority of pediatricians think the Academy does a very good job of informing members about new developments or new information on immunization issues, although opinion varies by type of immunization: for the Influenza vaccine and Tdap, 63% each rated communication from the Academy as "very good"; for MCV4, 62% rated communication as "very good"; for Hepatitis A, 54% and for MMR-V, 53% said the Academy does a "very good" job. For all vaccines, most of the balance of respondents rated communication from the Academy as adequate (33% each for Influenza and Tdap vaccine; MCV4, 35%; Hepatitis A, 39%; MMR-V, 40%); very few pediatricians say the AAP does a poor job (4% each for Influenza, Tdap, MCV4; 7% each for Hepatitis A and MMR-V).
- About one-third of pediatricians (35%) strongly agree and 53% agree the AAP provides them with the information they need to address parents' concerns regarding vaccine safety, long term effects, side effects and risks/benefits.
- Fewer than 10% of pediatricians (8.9%) say they have had an occasion during the past 3 months where a parent brought up an issue regarding vaccines/immunization about which they did not have sufficient information to adequately address their concerns; 85% of pediatricians say this has not happened and 6% are unsure.
 - Pediatricians who have not had sufficient information to address parents' vaccine concerns report this occurred an average of six times during the past three months. They most frequently mentioned a lack of information about newly recommended vaccines, thimerosal/mercury/preservatives in vaccines, long-term safety and effectiveness of vaccines.

Resources for New Information on Vaccines:

- Pediatricians named *AAP News* as their most frequent source of new vaccine information: 41% of pediatricians say they receive a lot of information on vaccines from *AAP News*, while 49% say it is the source of some of their vaccine information.
- One-third of pediatricians (34%) cite AAP emails (eBreaking News, AAP OnCall) as a major source of their vaccine information and 50% say it is the source of some of their vaccine information.
- Twenty-eight percent of pediatricians say journal articles are the source of much new vaccine information and 62% say it is the source of some new information.
- One-fourth of pediatricians say the AAP web site is the source of a lot of their new information on vaccines and 56% say it is the source for some of their vaccine information. Similarly, 27% say the CDC web site is the source of a lot and 48% say it is the source of some of their new vaccine information.
- Pharmaceutical companies/ reps are named by 25% of pediatricians as the source of a lot of new vaccine information and 49% say they are the source of some new information.

Strategies Used to Increase Immunization Rates:

- More than two-thirds of pediatricians (69%) say their practice has made efforts this past year to reduce missed opportunities for immunization and 58% say they have updated immunization protocols in order to increase immunization rates.
- Nearly one-half of pediatricians report their practice has met to discuss office policies (49%) and performed chart reviews (46%) as strategies to increase immunization rates; 35% report their practice has initiated Quality Improvement projects related to vaccines.