

ADULT VACCINATION IN THE ASIA PACIFIC: MOBILISING POLICY AND PRACTICE KNOWLEDGE

CONSENSUS STATEMENT | APRIL 2019

The Asia Pacific region - home to three of the world's largest cities - Tokyo, Delhi and Shanghai - is diverse in terms of topography, climate, income distribution and infrastructure, which showcase the disparities that exist within the region that make implementing regional actions particularly challenging.

This region is also experiencing unprecedented population changes, with the number of older people expected to more than double from 535 million in 2015 to about 1.3 billion by 2050. These changes necessitate improved access to integrated health care including immunization across the life through a multi-pronged - preventative, curative and rehabilitative - approach.

The 2010 Global Burden of Disease Study found that infections are responsible for 40% to 60% of deaths and disability adjusted life-years in low-income parts of the Asia Pacific, emphasizing the crucial nature of vaccination as a preventive public health tool not just in low-income settings, but across the Asia Pacific and worldwide.

Preventive health care acknowledges that people have the capacity and drive to invest in their own health throughout their lifespan so long as there are appropriate systemic supports in place to address their needs.

The 'Adult Vaccination in the Asia Pacific: Mobilising policy and practice knowledge' brought together interdisciplinary experts championing increased country-level vaccination uptake. Modifications to vaccine infrastructure - vaccine guidelines, funding, delivery, surveillance and awareness - are critical to improving uptake rates and prioritizing adult vaccination in the region.

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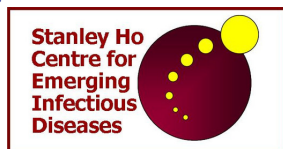
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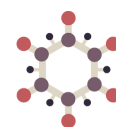
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With the purpose of achieving these infrastructure improvements, crucial next steps were endorsed, including the need to:

- Generate intergovernmental dialogue that identifies systemic gaps in vaccination infrastructure – for example, lack of information sharing between levels of government – that can result in low vaccination coverage throughout the lifecycle.
- Develop vaccination education and tools for health care professionals in their places of employment, creating programs that cater to all who are responsible for being knowledgeable on vaccination.
- Deliver continuous vaccination education in conjunction with academic institutions to all Build partnerships within and between countries in the region to learn from one another methods of improving vaccination uptake and support each other to build strong vaccination infrastructure;
- Recognize the barriers faced by at-risk groups including people with chronic diseases, older people, indigenous people, and direct attention to these groups when creating awareness campaigns around the health value of vaccination, and;
- Promote vaccination as part of a comprehensive public health strategy across the life course.

The 'Adult Vaccination in the Asia Pacific' expert meeting demonstrated across sectors and disciplines the value of building bridges across professional and geographic boundaries, using one voice to advocate for improved vaccination policies and practices.

Using their collective capabilities and resources, this consensus statement represents delegates' joint commitment to the above next steps. Success in achieving these steps requires a cohesive voice that supports improvements to vaccination policies and practices, including enhanced awareness and education as well as more expansive infrastructure that includes streamlined vaccine delivery and surveillance across all ages, with a focus on at-risk groups.

References

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