

Incorporating Parent Preferences in Decision Making About Childhood Vaccines

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Significance. Parent concerns about the safety of childhood vaccines are a salient health care issue and an important area for enhancing informed health care decision making. The most common parent concern is that children are receiving too many vaccines in one doctor's visit. National recommendations currently are set contrary to this concern, specifying simultaneous administration of all vaccines due at a visit. Parent preferences could play an important role in national policy and clinical decisions about multiple vaccines, but data on well-informed preferences is lacking.

Specific Aims. The long-term goal of this work is to help parent preferences become more fully incorporated in policy and clinical decisions about how childhood vaccines are administered. This project will describe the full range of preferences about administration of multiple vaccines, identify effective approaches to giving parents information, and measure well-informed preferences among a national sample. The specific aims are to: (1) Create a lexicon of decision components and parent preferences relevant to simultaneous administration of multiple vaccines; and (2) Develop and field a survey to characterize national parent preferences about simultaneous administration of influenza and other vaccines.

Patient and Stakeholder Engagement. The National Advisory Committee for this project consists of persons with diverse perspectives, including parents of vaccine-injured children, pediatricians who serve on the most powerful national committees on vaccines, and officers with federal public health agencies. This group will advise throughout development and dissemination, to maximize this project's impact.

Innovation. This project is creative in that it will discover how to simultaneously inform parents, elicit consideration of values and tradeoffs, and assess the breadth and variance of preferences in the population on this key issue. It also is innovative in its plan for findings to be presented to key national vaccine policy committees and made public through traditional and non-traditional channels for parents and providers. This effort will bring key stakeholders into a productive conversation about a clinical dilemma that affects every parent and child in the nation. It will also describe well-informed parent preferences to help inform national recommendations and clinical practice, promoting a patient-centered approach to health policy.

RELEVANCE

This project is central to PCORI's interests. It will help parents make well-informed health care decisions and enhance national policy and clinical practice through evidence-based characterization of parent preferences on vaccines. The study plans and dissemination will be shaped by a diverse stakeholder group of parents, providers, and public health officials. This pilot project's plan to identify elicit well-informed preferences from parents is both innovative and vitally important in that it will develop approaches fundamental to patient-centered outcomes research. It is responsive to the pilot project interest area of developing, refining, and evaluating patient-centered approaches for translating evidence into practice in ways that account for individual patient preferences for various outcomes. The plan to disseminate results through multiple channels, including committees that make national vaccine recommendations and traditional and non-traditional sources for parents and providers, will use creative approaches to maximizing the impact of patient preferences on health care practice and policy.

* Tracy Lieu was affiliated with Harvard Medical School when this project was funded.