

Appendix 5: Vaccination of refugees and migrants against measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), polio and tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, haemophilus type B (DTP-Hib)

Rationale

Not surprisingly, surveillance data show that higher vaccination coverage equates with lower burden of disease. Migrants have been identified as a vulnerable group due to suboptimal vaccination. Studies based in various European countries have found migrants are less likely to be vaccinated against measles. This is attributed to poor access to health care, ranging from cultural and language barriers, to socioeconomic and ethnic discrimination. The WHO European Region has set objectives to eliminate endemic measles and endemic rubella (leading to congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) elimination). Strategies identified to achieve this goal include: achieving and sustaining very high coverage (>95%) with two doses of measles and at least one dose of rubella vaccine through high-quality routine immunization services; providing measles and rubella vaccination opportunities, including supplementary immunization activities (SIAs), to all population groups at risk for and susceptible to measles and/or rubella (for which migrants would be an important target population); and strengthen surveillance systems by rigorous case investigation and laboratory confirmation of suspected sporadic cases and outbreaks.

Objectives

To identify the most practical and effective methods to immunize migrants against vaccine preventable diseases.

Key questions:

1. Should one or two doses of MMR vaccine be administered to migrants in Europe? Is this different for children vs adults?
2. Should a complete primary series of DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine be given to all migrant children in Europe? Should adult migrants in Europe receive a complete primary series or booster doses?
3. Among migrants in Europe, are there targeted interventions that could increase vaccine uptake?

Population important outcomes:

- Vaccination rates for: measles, congenital rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, Hib, polio
- Disease burden/rate: measles, congenital rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, Hib meningitis/epiglottitis/otitis media, polio

Appendix 5 - Figure 1: Logic model, Vaccine Preventable Diseases

