

P0860

Paper Poster Session

Vaccines in public health

Perceptions of HBV infection and hepatitis B vaccine in a French urban free testing centre for sexually transmitted infections

Lauranne Moyroud¹, Sarah Hustache¹, Laurence Goirand¹, Marianne Hauzanneau², Olivier Epaulard^{*3}

¹*Conseil Général de L'isère, Health Prospective and Education, Grenoble, France*

²*Conseil Général de L'isère, Free Testing Center for Sexually Transmitted Infections , Grenoble, France*

³*Grenoble University Hospital, Infectious Diseases, Grenoble, France*

Background: hepatitis B virus (HBV) vaccine is proposed in France to all infants and to at-risk populations. Concerns on the risk of adverse effects and vaccine refusal are routinely expressed by people attending our free testing center for sexually transmitted infections (FTC-STI). We aimed to explore in this exposed population the knowledge concerning HBV infection, to quantify HBV vaccine refusal, and the reasons for this refusal.

Material/methods: All subjects attending Grenoble FTC-STI during 3 months in 2013 were proposed to fill an anonymous questionnaire. Ten questions explored the knowledge on HBV infection; 7 the perception of HBV vaccine; 7 the acceptance of free HBV vaccination on the same day; and 7 the reasons for refusing this proposition. Determination of HBV serological status was performed.

Results: The questionnaire was filled by 735 subjects (64.7% of the attendants during the study period) (mean age 27.9±9.2 years; males 59.9%). The majority identified this disease as being potentially severe, existing in France, and potentially lasting the entire life. Concerning HBV vaccine, less than 50% agreed (totally/mostly) that it was safe; when asked if it was dangerous or “not well characterized”, 44.2% and 45.0% respectively were “without opinion”, and 14.0% and 26.5% respectively agreed (totally/mostly). When asked if they do not trust all vaccines and if they do not trust HBV vaccine, 28.9% and 39.0% respectively of the unvaccinated population agreed (totally/mostly); one third accepted to get vaccinated on the same day; only 18.7% disagreed (totally/mostly) when asked if they were afraid of the adverse effects of this vaccine. Subjects with negative perceptions of HBV vaccine had lower vaccine coverage.

Conclusions: The negative perception of HBV vaccine is marked in this at-risk population, particularly concerning supposed adverse effects. Communication toward this population must include reassurance on the innocuous nature of this vaccine.