Exploring HPV Vaccination Refusal Among Ethnic Minorities in England: A Comparative Qualitative Study

Alice Forster, Lauren Rockcliffe, Laura Marlow, Helen Bedford, Emily McBride & Jo Waller
Background and aims

• HPV causes cervical cancer

• HPV vaccine offered to 12-13 year old girls

• Uptake is high (~90%) but lower among girls from ethnic minority backgrounds

Aimed to explore the factors that prevented ethnic minority parents from vaccinating, compared to White British non-vaccinators and ethnic minority vaccinators
Method and Results

• Conducted interviews with 33 parents.

• Reasons for non-vaccination fit into 6 main themes:
  o Concerns about the vaccine
  o The influence of others
  o Information needs of parents
  o Trust in authorities
  o Preventing HPV-related cancer using means other than vaccination
  o Emotion
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if they said, ‘Right, I’m holding a night. If you want to know about the injection... the, err, vaccination, come down.’ I would be down there and I would take 15 people with me [...] ‘Let’s go, so we can educate our self and know what they’re pumping into our body.’ (African)
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you're not supposed to have sex before marriage, and that's something that is taught in religion. Based on that, if we follow religion, we should be able to protect ourselves more… (Bangladeshi)
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Conclusions

• Some reasons were specific to parents from ethnic minority backgrounds:
  o A preference for abstinence from sex before marriage
  o The belief that external forces control whether cervical cancer develops
• Many reasons were cited by parents regardless of ethnic background
• Reasons identified could be used to guide development of interventions to increase uptake
• Need to tackle topics relevant to ethnic minority parents & consider format of information