



HProImmune

Promotion of Immunization for Health Professionals in Europe



Bulletin

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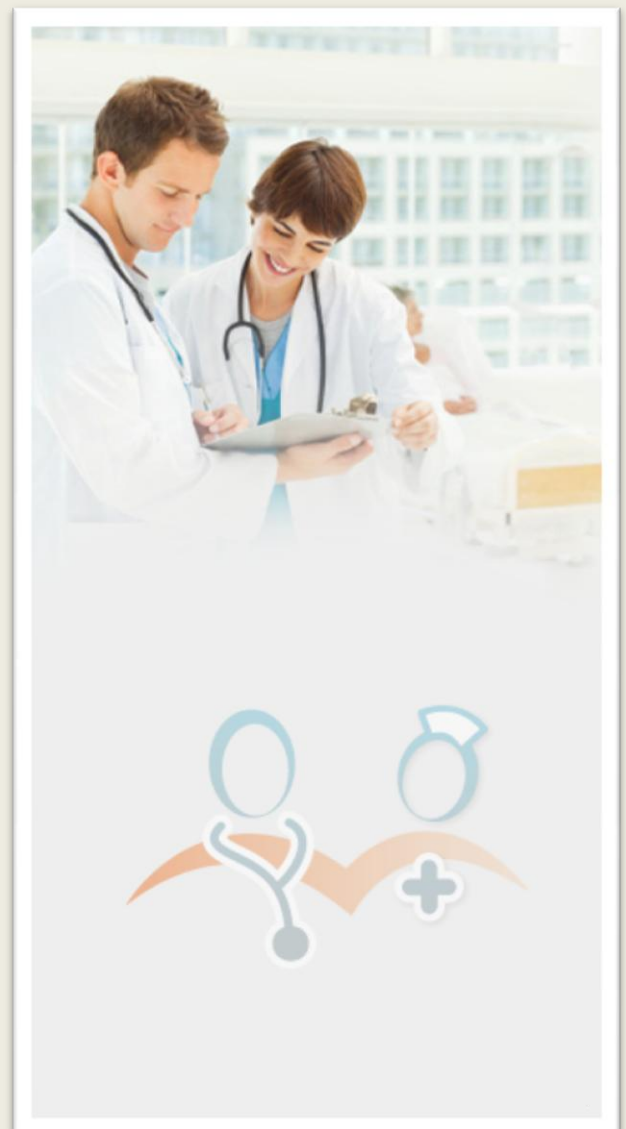
www.hproimmune.eu

The Project

The Institute of Preventive Medicine Environmental and Occupational Health, Prolepsis, is coordinating a new 3-year European project, which officially started on September 1, 2011. HProImmune is co-funded by the DG SANCO Public Health Program 2008 – 2013.

The project will add to the knowledge on barriers concerning Health Care Workers (**HCWs**) **immunization** and develop educational material for health professionals in both the private and the public sector, as well as propose recommendations for policy-makers.

The HPROIMMUNE Project has received funding from the European Union / DG Health and Consumer Protection.



Executive
Agency for
Health and
Consumers

Why such a Project?

The HProImmune project aims to promote immunization among HCWs, which is **a vital issue for public health.**

- **Pathogens transmitted via blood or infectious droplets, are known health and occupational risks for health care workers**, many of which have died while caring for their patients.
 - Examples include viral hemorrhagic fevers, SARS and Tuberculosis (TB) outbreaks.
 - Seasonal influenza, on the other hand, causes substantial direct and indirect disease burden every year as far as HCWs are concerned, who are at higher risk for both infection and transmission of influenza to high risk patients and colleagues causing nosocomial outbreaks.
- In relation to **influenza, significant outbreaks in health care settings can lead to absenteeism resulting in inadequate staffing**, which may in turn diminish quality of care and increase costs.
- Despite a relevant worker protection EU directive (2000/54/EC) that has already been transposed into national legislation, **no significant increase in vaccination coverage has been recorded for HCWs.**
- **No uniform recommendation exists for the particular vaccinations needed for HCWs**, who in turn do not seem to comply with existing guidance and recommendations for vaccination.
- The EU Council recommendation of 22 December 2009 on seasonal influenza vaccination sets **a clear target to reach by 2015 75% vaccination coverage for the older age groups and people with chronic diseases, as well as other high risk groups including, if possible, HCWs.** The recent 2009 (H1N1) influenza pandemic experience offers an opportunity to draw valuable lessons for the appropriate approach to HCWs in order to achieve this goal, as the vaccination coverage rates varied significantly among the different countries (e.g. Greece 3,5%, France 8%, Norway 45%).
- Changing HCW behavior towards vaccination will also enable this group **to serve as an accurate information source for their patients and communities and become a role model**, as surveys showed that health professionals were highly trusted sources concerning advice on immunization with novel influenza vaccine.

Objectives

The **general objective** of this project is to promote vaccination coverage of health care workers in different health care settings by developing a tailored communication tool.

With the **aim of enhancing European knowledge on HCW immunization**, HProImmune will:

- review, summarize and widely disseminate existing information and best practices
- explore behaviors and barriers regarding HCW immunization through qualitative analysis.

This knowledge will be compiled in a **comprehensive communication toolkit** addressing the needs and perspectives of medical personnel in primary care as well as hospital setting. It will also enable PH authorities and hospital administrators to plan and organize successful immunization activities contributing thus to the achievement of national strategic goals for increasing vaccination coverage, especially in the case of seasonal influenza.

The HProImmune toolkit will be piloted to also provide **evidence of its effectiveness**.

The consortium will keep the project **focused on a limited number of priority vaccines** and make every effort so that the deliverables are applicable to as many MS possible.

More specifically, HProImmune **aims to**:

- **Increase awareness about the most important vaccine preventable diseases** which pose a particular risk to EU HCWs
- **Increase awareness about immunizations among HCWs** through a database comprising vaccination specific information from across the EU
- **Provide new knowledge about vaccination behaviors and barriers** among HCWs
- **Identify best practices** for the immunization of health professionals
- **Provide new knowledge on how to communicate and promote immunizations** among HCWs by piloting a purpose and tailor-made Immunization Toolkit
- **Increase awareness and promote HCW immunizations through a widely disseminated and pilot tested HCW Immunization Promotion ToolKit** comprising recommendations, communication guidelines, tools and fact sheets.



Target Groups

The HProImmune target groups are **health professionals including nursing and auxiliary personnel who come into direct contact with patients**, addressed in the following 3 levels:

1. **Individual physicians and their assistants or nurses according to each MS's legal framework, mainly in primary care, accessed mostly through professional associations.** Private practicing physicians represent a major part of the HCW workforce, mostly practicing in primary care. The HCW Immunization Promotion Toolkit will include guidance, information on the vaccines and presentations addressing the needs of the primary care practitioner and a database of existing EU guidelines, policies and current legislation.
2. **HCWs in the hospital setting (hospital doctors, nurses, auxiliary personnel, laboratory technicians, hospital pharmacy personnel).** Hospital personnel are also an important target because they come into contact with vulnerable populations and their vaccination status can impact their patients' outcome. These groups will be indirectly targeted through public health professionals and health care administrators who are responsible for organizing their vaccination.
3. **Public health professionals (working at regional or national level) and health administrators (working at hospitals or at national level) who are responsible for organizing large scale immunization campaigns for HCWs.** The HCW Immunization Promotion Toolkit will also include information and tools to assist in organizing such activities, registering vaccinated personnel and monitoring adverse effects based on the collaborative work with ECDC/VENICE/EMA, presentations and information material for the organizers.



Partnership

Main Partner:

- Institute of Preventive Medicine, Environmental and Occupational Health, Prolepsis, *Greece*

Associated Partners:

- National Institute of Infectious Diseases Prof Dr Matei Bals - *Romania*
- Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine - *Poland*
- Mokymų Tyrimų ir Vystymo Centras - *Lithuania*
- Istituto Superiore Di Sanità - *Italy*
- Fundatia Romtens - *Romania*
- Cyprus University of Technology - *Cyprus*
- Technische Universität Dresden - *Germany*
- National Hellenic Nurses Association - *Greece*
- Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention - *Greece*



Collaborating Partners:

- Occupational Health (OCH) WHO/EURO Centre for Environment and Health - *Germany*
- Health Protection Agency, Centre for Infectious Diseases - *UK*



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Contact Details

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