

## PRESS RELEASE

### European Program, HproImmune - European Information Day for the Promotion of Necessary Immunizations for Health Professionals in the European Union **The majority of European health professionals would support mandatory vaccination against certain diseases.**

The Institute of Preventive Medicine, Environmental and Occupational Health, **Prolepsis**, organizes the HProImmune project European Information Day for the Promotion of Immunization for Health Professionals on Tuesday **July 8, 2014**, at 8:30 a.m. at the Royal Olympic Hotel (Athnasiou Diakou 28, Athens, Greece).

The meeting is organized in the framework of the three-year European project **HproImmune** – *Promotion of Immunization for Health Professionals in Europe* ([www.hproimmune.eu](http://www.hproimmune.eu)). The objective of this project is to provide information to health professionals about vaccinations that are necessary for their own protection, as well as to raise awareness about the most significant infectious diseases, which constitute a significant risk to their health, the health of their patients and their families.

The research conducted over the duration of this project yielded a set of **five recommended vaccinations** for all health professionals: those against **Hepatitis B; the seasonal flu; measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Td/Tdap); and chickenpox**. Additionally, the research team investigated the health professionals' barriers towards vaccination, which most of the time are lack of available time and no availability of the recommended vaccines in the workplace.

An online survey conducted during the HproImmune project, which received over **5,500 responses** from health professionals from 38 countries, showed that **the overwhelming majority of health professionals support vaccines** and acknowledge their contribution in improving the health status (**86.7%**). However, our survey pointed out that **nurses are seven times more likely to mistrust vaccines compared to medical doctors**, which highlights this particular group as a target for communication campaigns.

Health professionals recognize the risk of exposure to vaccine-preventable diseases during their work, resulting in subsequent exposure of their families and their vulnerable patients. **Nevertheless, significant numbers of health professionals are not up-to-date for their vaccines**. The majority of health professionals report that they have been vaccinated against Hepatitis B, but particularly low percentages are reported for other diseases (<20% have been vaccinated for chickenpox, measles, rubella and mumps). A relatively low percentage - particularly from Greece- is also recorded for seasonal flu vaccination among health professionals.

A very interesting finding of our survey was **that a significant majority (about 66%) of health professionals** who participated in the survey – especially physicians – **believe that certain vaccines should be mandatory for health professionals with clinical work.**

The educational and informational toolkit for the promotion of recommended vaccines, which was developed in the framework of the Program in consideration of the above findings, will be presented at the conference. This educational toolkit includes a database of recommendations for vaccination in European countries, newsletters concerning vaccines, presentations and communication tools, such as posters. The finalized material will be translated into seven languages spoken in the EU and will be available for use by public health professionals from all countries.

Representatives from international organizations and national public health institutions will participate in the meeting, as well as representatives from medical and nursing organizations and health professionals from 15 countries.

The Prolepsis Institute is the project coordinator for **HproImmune**, which is co-funded by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Health Program 2008-2013 of the European Union, Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG-SANCO). Project partners represent universities and public health agencies from Italy, Germany, Romania, Lithuania, Poland and Cyprus.

The event agenda is attached. For more information, please visit the program websites:

HProImmune website: <http://www.hproimmune.eu/>

Prolepsis Institute – HproImmune Program:

<http://www.prolepsis.gr/new/gr/Projects/35/Promotion-of-Immunization-for-Health-Professionals-in-Europe--HProImmune.html>

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