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**An Assessment of Healthcare Staff's Knowledge About, Attitude Toward, Influenza Vaccination in Iraq**

This study investigated knowledge of, and attitude to seasonal influenza vaccination in HCPs. Several studies have shown that influenza vaccination is effective in protecting HCPs against infection, minimizing transmission of the disease to their patients and decreasing mortality and morbidity among vulnerable patient. Vaccination also reduced absenteeism and improved the health status of HCPs. The results of the present study revealed a low percentage of influenza immunization among HCPs (18.9%) during 2018-2019 season.

Our data revealed significant gaps in HCPs’ knowledge about influenza vaccination. The low rate of immunization in HCPs practising in iraq seems likely to be related to lack of knowledge and awareness. However this study did not demonstrate a consistent positive correlation between HPCs’ belief in the effectiveness of the influenza vaccine and the decision to be immunized. The results of our study showed that 71.7% of participants believed that influenza vaccine is effective in preventing influenza.in addition, our data showed variable levels of awareness of and knowledge about influenza vaccination in HCPs. Most HCPs had basic knowledge of the influenza vaccine and infection and most participating HCPs were aware that people with asymptomatic influenza can transmit influenza 49.1%.Previous studies have reported variable rates of belief among the healthcare workers (HCWs) that the influenza vaccine can cause influenza infection 49.1% because it contain live viruses. A18.9% of all respondents in our study shared this misconception. In this study the most commonly reported reasons for non-compliance with vaccination recommendations were fear of contracting illness and concerns about side-effects of the influenza vaccine such as fever, fatigue and myalgia. These findings are consistent with other studies which investigated participants’ main reason for not taking up influenza vaccination. This suggests that vaccination campaigns should include facts about the rate of adverse reactions to the influenza vaccine. Other reasons given by HCPs for non-compliance included the belief that influenza is not serious condition therefore not worth vaccinating 54.8%.In this study, 69.8% of participants reported that not everyone is familiar with influenza vaccination.

A lot of work is needed to increase HCPs’ compliance with influenza vaccination recommendations; interventions should include educational campaigns to address misconceptions. Successful vaccination programmes combine publicity and education for HCPs and other potential vaccine recipients, use of reminder and recall systems, assessment of organization-level vaccination rates combined with feedback to staff, and efforts to remove administrative and financial barriers to vaccination