A Needs Assessment Questionnaire of the Use of Pneumococcal Vaccines in Adults Older Than 65 Years

Mary F. Henningfield, PhD;1,2 Alice S. Yuroff, PhD;1,2 Jon Leja, MD;1 Lisa Sampson, MBA;1,2 Paul Hunter, MD1

University of Wisconsin - Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, Madison, WI; Department of Family Medicine and Community Health; Wisconsin Research and Education Network; Department of Medicine

Background
In 2019, the US Centers for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended that the use of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine 13 valent (PCV13) be based on "shared clinical decision-making for adults 65 years or older who do not have an immunocompromising condition, gout/renal fluid leak, or cochlear implant and have never received a dose of PCV13." An updated recommendation was made in 2021:

- Shared decision making (SDM) is important to the delivery of high-quality, patient-centered, personalized care.
- SDM has been recommended for decisions related to a variety of clinical preventive services, but few recommendations for SDM for vaccines exist.a

Objective
- To gather feedback from clinicians to develop resources to facilitate SDM for the use of PCV13 in adults 65 years or older.

Methods: Questionnaire
- We developed an online questionnaire based on a knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors model.
- The 20-questions included:
  - Demographic information
  - Knowledge of and attitudes towards use of pneumococcal vaccines and SDM
  - Behaviors regarding use of pneumococcal vaccines, SDM, and telemedicine
- Changes in behaviors since the pandemic
- Respondents could provide contact information if they wished to participate in the quality improvement (QI) project

Setting and Participants
Beginning in April 2021, our questionnaire was disseminated through:
- The Wisconsin Research and Education Network (WREN) newsletter, which reaches >1,000 constituents
- E-mails to UW Health clinicians in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- The Pharmacy Practice Enhancement and Action Research Link (PearlRx) of Wisconsin, which has 628 pharmacist members
- Personalized email outreach to connections across Wisconsin (P. Hunter)
- After the ACP proposed new recommendations for pneumococcal vaccines in October 2021, we completed additional outreach to UW Health Clinicians in General Internal Medicine using a modified questionnaire.

Demographics
- 75 respondents
  - 48% Physicians
  - 40% Pharmacists
  - 8% Assistant practitioners or nurse practitioners
- Years in clinical practice
  - 75% More than 10 years
  - 15% 6-10 years
  - 8% 5 years or less
  - 3% Resident or other training

Knowledge
The questionnaire revealed knowledge gaps that can be addressed in the planned educational materials.

Attitudes
- 71% thought it was worthwhile to give the PCV13 vaccine to their patients 65 years old

Behaviors
- About 1/3 of physicians counseled patients 65 years and older on the potential harms and benefits of vaccines more than 8 times per week
- 27% of respondents indicated that they or their clinic:
  - Assessed immunization needs of their patients at every clinical encounter
  - Used standing orders for vaccines
  - Used EHR or other systems to automatically remind patients and clinic staff about vaccinations

Views on SDM
- 96% of respondents indicated that SDM regarding the PCV13 vaccine would be feasible in their practice, but
  - 25% noted that it would be somewhat difficult to explain the potential harms and benefits of PCV13 to patients 65 years

Questions on the questionnaire that are recommended for discussion regarding pneumococcal vaccinations with patients 65 years or older:

- How have you conducted discussions regarding pneumococcal vaccinations with your patients older than 65 years?
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Conclusions
- Our results provided insights into the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of clinicians and pharmacists regarding pneumococcal vaccines and use of SDM in adults older than 65 years.
- Despite indicating that SDM would be feasible in their practice, one-fourth of respondents noted that it would be somewhat difficult to explain potential harms and benefits of pneumococcal vaccine in adults 65 years and older.
- Results will serve as the basis for development of educational materials on pneumococcal vaccines.

References