Washington State Licensed Child Care Facility Directors’ Perspectives on Childhood Immunization

Douglas J. Opel MD, MPH,1,2 Ashmita Banerjee BA,3 Peggy King BSN, MFA,4 Cathe Paul RN, MPH,4 Danette Glassy MD,4 Kyle Yasuda MD1

1Department of Pediatrics, University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, WA; 2Seattle Children’s Research Institute, Seattle, WA; 3Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA; 4Coalition for Safety and Health in Early Learning, Seattle, WA

Background

• The program director of a child care facility in Washington State is responsible for:
  • verifying and assessing immunization information of (enrolled) children for accuracy and completeness
  • educating coworkers and (enrolled) parents about the importance of immunizations
• No data exist regarding child care facility directors’ compliance with immunization education and monitoring requirements or how their own immunization attitudes and beliefs might impact their compliance

Objective

• To determine Washington State child care facility directors’ compliance with state immunization education and monitoring requirements and the role of directors’ immunization attitudes and beliefs on compliance

Hypothesis

• Directors would have similar concerns regarding childhood immunizations as do parents and these concerns would negatively affect their compliance with education and monitoring requirements

Methods

• Anonymous, self-administered survey mailed in May 2010
• Survey based upon validated Parent Attitudes about Childhood Vaccines (PACV) survey
• Primary study outcomes were child care facility director agreement with 2 survey statements:
  1. I educate parents of children enrolled in my program about the importance of immunizations
  2. I monitor whether or not children enrolled in my program are up to date on their immunizations

Results

• In a subgroup analysis of only those directors who were also parents (N=410), those who had ever delayed or refused an immunization for their own child were significantly less likely to educate enrolled parents about the importance of immunizations:
  • OR .44 [95% CI .26, .74] for those who delayed an immunization
  • OR .30 [95% CI .17, .54] for those who refused an immunization
• This remained statistically significant after adjusting for director age, years in current position, facility’s average attendance, and number of employed staff

Conclusions

• Washington State licensed child care facility directors generally view childhood immunizations positively and most are compliant with state requirements for immunization education and monitoring
• The majority of directors have concerns about vaccine safety and these concerns largely mirror those of the general parent population
• Many of these immunization attitudes and beliefs are associated with decreased director compliance with Washington State's child care immunization education or monitoring requirements