



Applicant Information

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Abstract Details

Title:

Challenges and enablers of caregiver adherence to RTS, S vaccination schedules in Ghana

Category:

Scaling access, delivery and integration of health services and goods (including traditional medicine)

Authors:

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Objectives:

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended the use of the RTS,S/AS01 malaria vaccine for children in regions with moderate to high Plasmodium falciparum transmission after a pilot study confirmed the vaccine’s safety, its significant reduction in severe, life-threatening malaria, and its ability to be administered effectively within standard childhood vaccination settings. This study examined the challenges and enablers of adherence to RTS,S vaccination schedules by primary caregivers (PCGs) in Ghana.

Method:

A qualitative panel research (QPR) design was used in this study, where a cohort of PCGs were followed for two years and interviewed on three different occasions. Completed transcripts of 45 PCGs and 24 health professionals were imported into NVivo 12 for theme categorization and analysis.

Results:

Enablers of adherence were benefits of the RTS, S vaccine, trust in the health system and health workers, spousal support, and caregivers’ perceptions about the vaccination schedule. Challenges to adherence were economic and social activities, forgetfulness of the schedules, adverse events following immunisation (AEFI), and inability to read the vaccination schedules.

Conclusion:

Adherence to the RTS, S malaria vaccine schedule largely depends on caregivers’ trust in its ability to reduce the risk of malaria. This trust, fostered through effective education and communication between caregivers and health workers, plays a key role in addressing concerns about the vaccine. Accessibility to vaccination centres is also vital, as transportation challenges can impede adherence.

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