Applicant Information

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Abstract Details

Title:

Evaluation of the Adverse Events Following Immunization Surveillance System Bolgatanga Municipality, Upper East Region - Ghana, 2017 - 2021

Category:

Maternal and child health

Authors:

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Objectives:

Globally, concerns about vaccine safety persist, with Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) potentially occurring within 28 days of vaccination. AEFI frequencies range from 13% to 34%, and all events should be reported, regardless of severity. In Bolgatanga Municipality, Ghana, only two of the nine sub-municipalities reported four AEFI cases from 2017 to 2019, suggesting inadequate detection. This study evaluates the AEFI surveillance system to assess its effectiveness, usefulness, and attributes.

Method:

Using the Centers for Disease Control guidelines, we conducted a surveillance system evaluation. Key stakeholders were interviewed at regional, municipal, and sub-municipal levels, including the Food and Drugs Authority. AEFI surveillance records from January 2017 to November 2021 were reviewed in Bolgatanga Municipality. Quantitative data were analysed using MS Excel, and qualitative data from interviews were examined using directed content analysis.

Results:

A total of 32 AEFI cases were reported, with 14 classified as serious, though none were vaccine-related. The Global Vaccine Action Plan target of detecting 10 AEFI cases per 100,000 surviving infants was only met in 2020. Inconsistencies were identified between the DHIMS2 database and hard copies. Despite underreporting, all Community Health Nurses (42/42) found the surveillance system useful for improving vaccination vigilance and supporting training and logistics. However, the system lacked sensitivity, timeliness, and data quality, and no feedback was received from the FDA.

Conclusion:

The AEFI surveillance system is useful but falls short of its objectives due to underreporting. Feedback from the FDA, training, and supportive supervision are recommended to improve reporting timeliness, data quality, and completeness.

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