

## Minutes – EAP Vaccination Working Group Meeting, Sofia, 18 May 2018

Chair: Hans Juergen Dornbusch, Austria

Co-chair: Lia Syridou

Having welcomed the attendees and after approval of the current agenda and the minutes of the previous Vaccination Working Group session in Brussels on 1 Dec 2017 Hans Juergen provided an update on recent activities:

The EAP strongly supports the important goal of a Europe-wide **Immunization Information System (IIS)**. The topic is on the agenda of the Nordic Vaccine Meeting (Helsinki 14-15 June 2018). A technical guidance developed by ECDC in collaboration with EAP to support European countries with their decision-making processes for implementation of Electronic Immunization Records (EIR) is expected to be available in September 2018.

After a recent final meeting of the **ADVANCE IAB** (“Accelerated development of vaccine benefit-risk collaboration in Europe” / Implementability Advisory Board) at the ECDC in Stockholm the EU/IMI/ECDC project is scheduled to be finalized end of this year, providing a guidance for effective benefit-risk assessment of vaccines.

The EAP has also been involved in a more recently started **ECDC Technical Advisory Council** for Strategic Communication to increase Vaccine Coverage.

The EAP Vaccination WG was invited to advise the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) for a **Vaccination Consultation Meeting at the European Commission** in February 2018 aiming at securing resources, better communication to address vaccine hesitancy, improving vaccine availability and dismantling barriers to vaccine access for vulnerable groups, which markedly increased the EC’s awareness regarding the importance of vaccination.

Statements increasing vaccine confidence posted on Twitter by EAP representatives during the **European Immunization Week** created high public interest.

The EAP is collaborating with the European Scientific Working Group on Influenza (ESWI) in organizing a Flu Summit to be held in Leuven on 28 Sept 2018 with the topic **“Bringing Childhood Flu Vaccination to the next level”** and with the aim to develop a position paper as well as a roadmap of actions.

The invitation to sign an EU Manifesto on Influenza Vaccination was discussed and will be made dependent on the respective ESPID decision.

Young EAP contributions comprise a recent blog (by Daniela Klobassa et al.) regarding the as yet unmet WHO goal of **measles eradication** in Europe with a fourfold rise of measles cases from

2016 to 2017 and a review of the last **influenza season** (provided by Ivanna Romankevich) with all circulating virus strains largely covered by the 4-valent vaccine, however, with persistently low vaccination rates.

**WHO calls for using every opportunity for vaccination**, including regular checks of vaccination documents with every visit, with access to daycare, school, university or army, training and vaccination of (frequently unvaccinated !) health care workers as well as travel vaccination. Additional vaccination campaigns are requested and, eventually, all physicians should be legally permitted to vaccinate and be reimbursed for this effort (which has not yet been the case in many countries). Among other opportunities this particularly concerns "child-parent" vaccination" by paediatricians as well as gynecologists vaccinating the male partners in addition to vaccination before & during pregnancy.

The importance of **empathic communication** with vaccination hesitant parents/patients, the leading position of primary care **paediatricians** in this context and the **role of social and mass media** were emphasized again.

A report on the recently closed **EAP parent survey on Vaccination Confidence** can be found in the minutes of the joint EAPRASnet session.

#### **Action plan:**

The Vaccination Working Group will continue to support European projects with the potential to increase confidence in vaccines and (thereby) immunization coverage using the active network already in place (ECDC, WHO, ESPID, ESWI, ...).

#### Specific topics:

Missed opportunities to vaccinate.

Ethical standards in journalism.

Legal restrictions regarding vaccination by paediatricians, other physicians and other health professionals within in the National Immunization Programs of their respective countries.