PRECONFERENCE

Thursday 20 November
08:30-12:00
Lunch provided

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Childhood vaccination – tackling the societal burden of disease of seasonal influenza

Seasonal influenza is a major public health issue, affecting 10% of the European population each year, causing an estimated 38,000 premature deaths.\(^1\,2\) The European Union (EU) encourages Member States (MS) to reach a 75% vaccination coverage rates for at risk groups, however, all but two MS are currently failing to achieve these targets. Despite recommendations from key institutions, children are not currently referenced as an at risk group by the EU Council. When looking at childhood influenza vaccinations, there are many pros and cons to consider:

- Immunisation is seen by many as a safe and cost-effective way to protect individuals, especially young children. The UK will extend their influenza vaccination coverage to include all school aged children by 2014 and the wider population, through the achievement of herd immunity. This policy has been in place in the USA since 2009.
- In contrast, other countries and some experts express doubts about the need for childhood influenza vaccinations, due in part to an under-recognised disease burden.

The preconference addresses the arguments from different public health perspectives. The speakers will debate whether there is a need for implementation of childhood vaccination to tackle the societal burden of disease of seasonal influenza.

**Chair:** Dr Günter Pfaff, Baden-Württemberg State Health Office, Stuttgart, Germany  
**Introduction:** Prof Alistair McGuire, London School of Economics, LSE Health, United Kingdom  
**Views from Infectious disease control:** Dr Ole Wichmann, Robert Koch Institute, Berlin, Germany  
**Views from child and adolescent public health:** Prof Adam Finn, Bristol University, United Kingdom  
**Views from ethics in public health:** Dr Peter Schröder-Bäck, Maastricht University, The Netherlands

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