

Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnant Women

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Introduction

Pregnant women are at an increased risk of pregnancy related complications such as preterm birth, caesarean birth, and stillbirth because of COVID-19 infection. Hence pregnant women are recommended the COVID-19 vaccination along with the pertussis vaccination and influenza vaccination. Experts in the field have estimated that vaccination rates in pregnant women are very low, however there is limited Australian data to describe vaccination rates within this population.

Aims

To assess the rate of COVID-19 vaccinations in antenatal patients managed as outpatients in a tertiary hospital

To observe whether these rates differ to vaccination rates of other vaccinations recommended during pregnancy.

Method

Design: Retrospective observational study

Population: Women who gave birth during February 2022, at a tertiary hospital.

Setting: Lyell McEwin Hospital, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network

Results

- Out of 148 patients identified for inclusion in the study,
 - 106 (72%) women received the first COVID-19 dose,
 - 98 (66%) had received two COVID-19 vaccinations.

Figure 1: Uptake of Antenatal Vaccinations

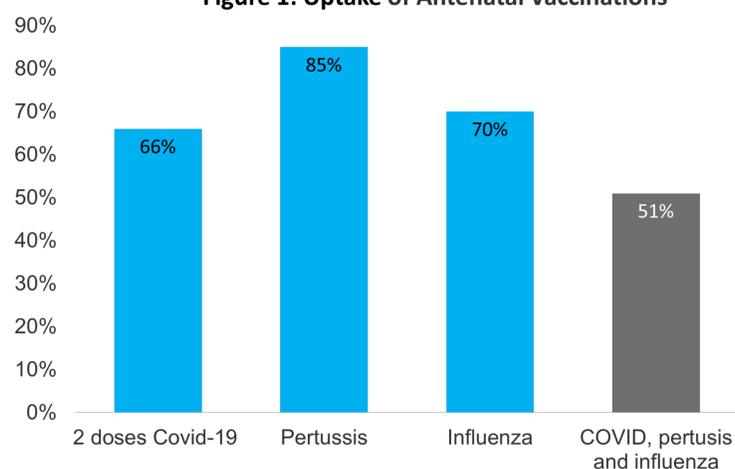
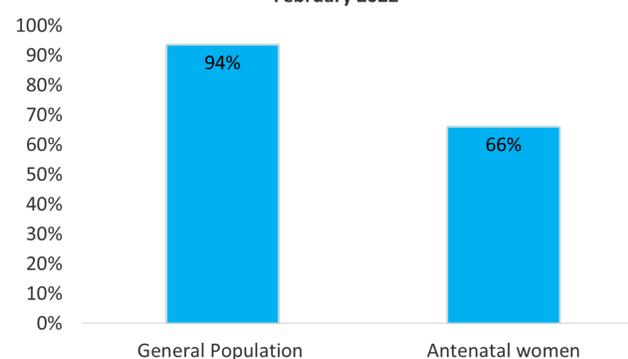


Figure 2: Percentage of the General Population and Sample Population Vaccinated with 2 Doses COVID-19 in February 2022



Discussion

- COVID-19 vaccination rates in our sample population were significantly lower than the general population in February 2022.
- There also appears to be a hesitancy towards receiving COVID-19 vaccine when compared to the pertussis vaccination, however the findings were indifferent when compared to the influenza vaccination.
- 92% of women who received the first vaccination, also received the second dose during their pregnancy.
- Hence, there may be other potential uncertainties contributing to low vaccination rates other than the recency of the COVID-19 vaccination.

Conclusion

Overall vaccination rates were low with only half of women receiving all recommended antenatal vaccines prior to delivery. Given the increased risk of complications from COVID-19, pertussis and influenza during pregnancy, interventions should be targeted to improve the access and uptake of all vaccinations within this population.

References

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- The Australian Immunisation Handbook. (2021). Vaccination for women who are planning pregnancy, pregnant or breastfeeding. [online] Available at: <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccination-for-special-risk-groups/vaccination-for-women-who-are-planning-pregnancy-pregnant-or-breastfeeding#pregnant-women> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2022].

For more information

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