



Eliminating cancers caused by HPV as a public health problem

THE SCIENCE AND EVIDENCE ARE CLEAR. NATIONAL AND EU DECISION MAKERS NOW NEED EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMES TO VACCINATE, SCREEN, TREAT AND INFORM THEIR POPULATIONS.

The goal of eliminating cancers related to the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) with universal vaccination is within reach. A solid foundation of evidence is emerging, but as in many public health efforts, the last mile is the biggest hurdle. Jumping this one requires a broad multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary effort – supported by public health education and literacy to promote the benefits of this solution to every family and to society.

This session saw animated exchanges on how close we are to reaching the goal of HPV eradication, and what is standing in the way. The example was presented of the successful gender-neutral vaccination campaign for girls and boys in the UK – a potential model for a Europe-wide effort. The case of Turkey’s effective national DNA-HPV screening initiative – that reaches urban and more remote village populations – shows that high-tech approaches can also work in lower income settings.

There was a lively discussion on the issue of ‘fake news’ on public perception of vaccination. The discussion highlighted a critical need for countries to be better at practically communicating research evidence and the reality of HPV to families, in simple and practical messages.

KEY MESSAGE

By taking the right policy actions on HPV vaccination, screening, treatment and research, the possibility of eliminating HPV caused cancers as a public health problem in Europe is a goal that can be achieved.

A range of evidence and practices were exchanged, including the recently published updated systematic review of the population-level impact of vaccinating girls and women against HPV, on HPV infections and related conditions. This includes data from 60 million people and up to eight years of post-vaccination follow-up. <http://bit.ly/338h6Rg>

At the session, participants overwhelmingly supported a resolution calling on European and national decision makers to increase their efforts on HPV cancer elimination. The European Cancer Summit Resolution on HPV Cancer Elimination states: “By 2030, effective strategies to eliminate cancers caused by HPV as a public health problem should be implemented in all European countries.” <http://bit.ly/2LUmIZK>

Alongside the resolution ECCO, ESGO and other partners have started developing an action plan setting out how countries and public health partners can make HPV eradication a reality. Key points include: by 2025, all European country cancer plans should include actions toward gender-neutral vaccination and they should be in place by 2030; by 2030 the target vaccination rate for adolescents of both genders will be 90%. Accompanying targets are being developed for early diagnosis and treatment. <http://bit.ly/3OUVrDU>

Resolution Session: Eliminating HPV-related cancers

Co-led by the European CanCer Organisation (ECCO) and the European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (ESGO)

The Global Picture: the opportunities for HPV elimination

Dr Maria Kyrgiou, Imperial College London, UK: Epidemiology of HPV infection and impact of HPV vaccination

Dr Murat Gultekin, Chair, European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (ESGO) Prevention & Diagnostics Task Force, European Network of Gynaecological Cancer Advocacy Groups (ENGAGE): Opportunities for improving HPV screening, international ESGO-led collaborations

Eliminating HPV in Europe: toward a Summit resolution

Peter Baker, Campaign Director, HPV Action UK: The campaign for gender neutral HPV vaccination in the UK – progress towards a similar European-level campaign

Prof Daniel Kelly, ECCO Board Member, Past President of European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS)

Moderator: Prof Daniel Kelly



Dr Maria Kyrgiou, Imperial College London, UK

