

Immunization – Nursing intervention in immunization to encourage vaccinationDr. Rajalaksmi. A¹, Dr. Devakumar²

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Abstract

Immunization is one of the safest and most cost-effective public health interventions, significantly improving health outcomes. Despite its critical role in disease prevention, adult immunization remains underutilized globally, contributing to preventable disease burdens. Nurses, with their extensive expertise, public trust, and involvement in healthcare, play a crucial role in promoting immunization. The International Council of Nurses (ICN) advocates for greater nursing participation in immunization efforts, emphasizing their involvement in public education, vaccine administration, prescription, and policy development.

A survey conducted by ICN in collaboration with Pfizer aimed to assess nurses' roles in immunization, identify barriers, and explore opportunities for enhancing their involvement. Findings revealed that while nurses are engaged in immunization activities, challenges such as legal restrictions on vaccine prescription, heavy workloads, insufficient training, and policy limitations hinder their full participation. The study underscores the need for legal reforms to enable nurses to prescribe and administer vaccines independently, which could significantly improve vaccination rates.

Key strategies to strengthen nursing engagement in immunization include legislative advocacy, integrating immunization training into nursing curricula, and enhancing professional development opportunities. Countries with well-established nursing roles in immunization have demonstrated higher vaccine uptake, reinforcing the importance of empowering nurses. The World Health Organization (WHO) and ICN are actively working on policy changes to enhance nurse-led immunization initiatives.

Addressing these barriers through policy modifications, workforce support, and enhanced education will enable nurses to maximize their impact on global immunization efforts. Expanding their role in vaccination can lead to better health outcomes and a more efficient healthcare system. ICN continues to advocate for policy reforms that support nurses' expanded role in immunization, aiming to bridge existing gaps and enhance global vaccine coverage.

Keywords: Immunization, Nurses' Role, Public Health, Vaccine Administration, Adult Immunization, Health Promotion, Nurse Prescription, International Council of Nurses

Introduction

The immunization is the safest and most cost-effective public health intervention that is now available and has a significant impact on health outcomes. Immunization is a crucial component of health promotion at every stage of life. The foundation of basic healthcare is health promotion and primary

illness prevention. Nurse, with their extensive experience in many contexts and sectors, a comprehensive education that involves social factors of good health, which have high levels of confidence from the public, can effectively effect change when the healthcare system shifts to population-based primary care. It is obvious that vaccination needs to receive more attention as part of this change as one of the most risk-free and cost-effective public health treatments that has a big impact on health outcomes.

Although immunization is an integral part of promoting health throughout all stages of life, adult immunization is presently receiving low attention globally. There is currently less emphasis on adult immunization globally, which has led to a higher burden of diseases that can be prevented by vaccinations. Access to safe immunizations may be limited or nonexistent in undeveloped countries, which affects immunization rates and results in both children and adults being affected by the disease and economic stress [1-4].

Nurses' responsibility in immunization

“Call for a nurse.” The International Council of Nurses has long promoted the idea that nurses can play a significant part in global immunization campaigns. The group has urged nurses to take a more active role in both basic healthcare and health promotion. There are many things to be done, and in 2016, there were one in ten babies lacked any vaccinations. and adult vaccination is also not utilized in a higher rate, it's obvious that nurses, as the importance of immunization as a public health intervention, must be highlighted by healthcare practitioners.

Indeed, given their participation in the full range of immunizations, the enormous efforts made across all healthcare sectors, and the high level of public confidence, contemporary nurses c, International Council Nurse thinks that growing and improve the involvement of nurses in vital strategy for raising global immunization rates is to engage in the complete range of immunization activities as part of their rising role in primary health care.

The spectrum of immunization activities includes spreading vaccination-related awareness and public advocacy, active health education, debunking myths, helping people manage their immunization schedules, administering vaccinations, prescribing vaccinations, supervising vaccination programmes, managing other team members, and providing advice on immunization strategies and programmes. In countries all around the world, nurses participate in each of these activities to varying degrees and are essential to expanding vaccination coverage. Nursing has created a thorough immunization strategy since it can have an impact on immunization rates over the world. However, due to its elegance in appearance, emphasis on preventative measures, and extensive reporting of negative outcomes, vaccination has led to a similar level of public confidence as nursing has in certain cases [5-8].

The present state of nursing's participation in immunization

Finding out what role nurses are already playing in immunization is a starting step towards enhancing nursing's involvement. What precisely are the challenges to nurses getting more involved in immunizations, and in what ways could there be possibilities for improvement. To realize its comprehensive immunization goal, ICN and Pfizer renewed their collaboration agreement in 2018 to accomplish so. This was done by putting in place a survey to find out about the "current state" of nursing and vaccination.[9]

Aim of the survey

1. To describe the part that nurses play in promoting the country's prescribed immunization schedule.
2. To identify the leadership and clinical duties that nurses have in connection with immunization.
3. Identify the role of nurses in boosting vaccination rates and influencing public attitudes towards vaccinations
4. Find out what obstacles are in the way of nursing participation in immunizations.[10]

Engagement on immunization intervention

Important components of the nurse's job include knowing about vaccines and actively educating others about immunization, and nurses are extensively involved in immunization programmes. Issues that need to be addressed to help operate as effectively as possible include:

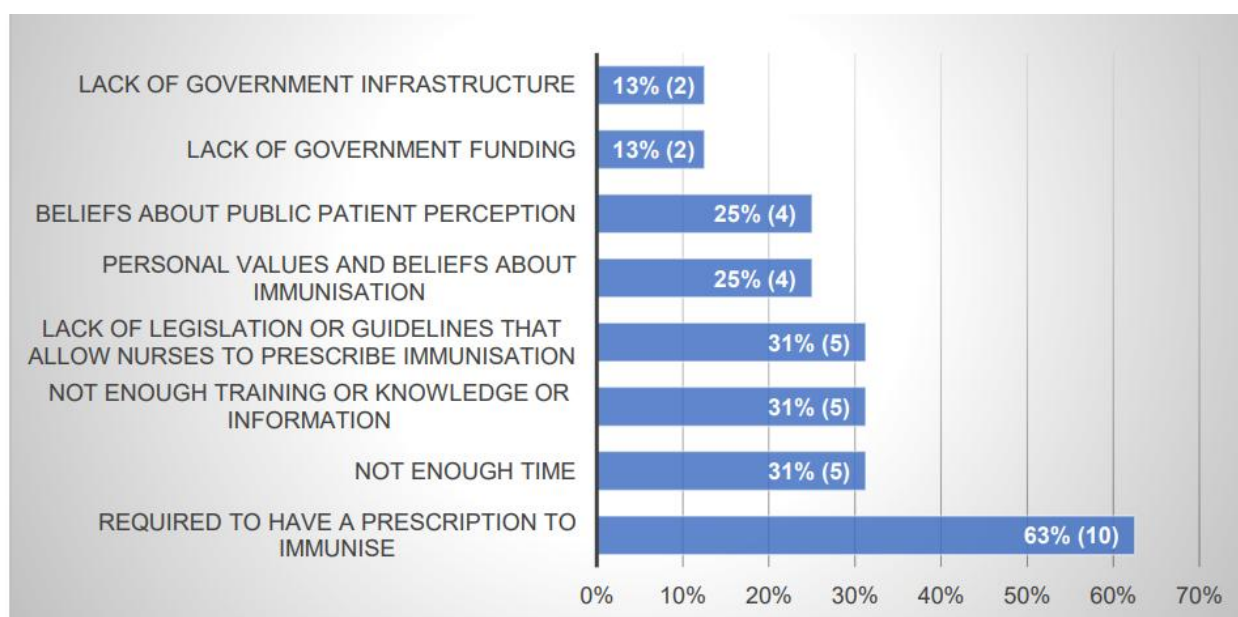
1. Immunization status
2. Educating on immunization
3. Working in a professional capacity
4. Identifying individuals for immunization actively
5. Prescribing vaccinations [11]

Being prepared for immunization roles

well-to-adequately prepared to provide vaccine advice and to prescribe immunizations. The consultative and prescription responsibilities for nurses are both developing, and it may be necessary to pay special attention to education and support to boost preparedness. level of expertise for immunization-related activities in teaching, disseminating evidence-based information about immunizations, and determining an individual's immunization status. The frequency with which nurses do these jobs and how well-prepared they are perceived as being may be impacted by time restraints and legal obligations.[12]

Obstacles to nurses participating in immunization

To implement several important vaccination activities, such as immunization learning, the provision of vaccines, prescription drug use, and policy creation. There is potential for development, especially to support duties involving healthcare policy, instruction, and medication. The primary hurdle for nurses participating more in immunization is "required to have a prescription for immunization," while other challenges include workload, laws, education, training, and private impressions of vaccination, as well as assumptions regarding the public's readiness to receive immunizations.[13]



The essential role of nurses in vaccine administration

Globally, Nurse provides vaccinations to a wide spectrum of patients and individuals across all fields. having more of an emphasis on, or more time available for administering, supervising, and following up on immunizations in the general public. Globally, coordinated efforts to improve nursing immunization education, ensuring sufficient immunization interventions, and passing enabling laws may enhance this nurse role and significantly impact immunization rates.

The basic nursing curriculum includes giving vaccinations in more than 81% of the countries that responded. However, Other types of education that were required were frequently described as ongoing education and in the workplace development of skills, possibly as a way to keep current and proficient in the intervention. [14-17]

Strengthening Immunization by the nurse

Vaccination participation in major events like

- Campaigning for a change in the legislation governing the nurse's ability to prescribe and administer vaccinations.
- Health care prescription and vaccination administration regulations and policymaking
- The inclusion of immunization and prescription dispensing by nurses in nursing education curricula.
- Promotion of the vaccine administration certification program [18-21]

Nurse immunization role engagement by country

In terms of the degree of nurse immunization role engagement, the majority of the nations questioned were portrayed as being excellent, growing, or developing. The nations with the highest rates of nurses participating in full-spectrum immunization works, such as learning, administration, and prescription of vaccines, vaccination management, and consulting responsibilities, were those where nurses were "very" likely to support and promote immunization. They had conquered important obstacles to fully participating in immunization programmes, including the need for a prescription and other internal, external, and organizational obstacles. [22-25]

Summary

Immunization remains one of the safest and most cost-effective public health strategies, significantly reducing morbidity and mortality across all age groups. Despite its proven benefits, adult immunization continues to receive inadequate global attention, especially in developing nations where access to vaccines is limited. This contributes to the persistence of preventable diseases and associated economic burdens. Nurses, as trusted and skilled healthcare professionals, play a vital role in promoting, administering, and managing immunization programs.

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) has emphasized the importance of expanding nurses' involvement in immunization. Nurses are uniquely positioned to enhance vaccine coverage through their diverse responsibilities, including public education, advocacy, vaccination administration, prescription, supervision, and policy contribution. Their engagement across these areas has a measurable impact on global immunization rates. However, disparities remain between nations in terms of the extent of nursing participation, largely due to structural and legislative barriers.

A global survey conducted by ICN and Pfizer identified key aims such as understanding the current role of nurses in immunization, defining leadership and clinical responsibilities, identifying challenges, and exploring opportunities to improve vaccine coverage. Findings revealed that while nurses are deeply involved in immunization delivery and education, their ability to prescribe vaccines remains restricted in many countries. This legal limitation was identified as the single greatest barrier to expanding their role. Other obstacles include excessive workload, lack of time, inadequate training, and insufficient policy support.

Education plays a central role in enhancing nurses' preparedness for immunization-related responsibilities. Over 80% of countries include vaccination in basic nursing curricula, while others rely on in-service and continuing education programs. Expanding formal education, ongoing training, and certification programs can improve nurses' competence and confidence in immunization delivery.

Strengthening nursing involvement requires several strategic actions: legislative reform to authorize nurse prescribing, policy support for nurse-led vaccination initiatives, inclusion of immunization modules in nursing education, and recognition of nurses' role in healthcare decision-making. Countries that have implemented such measures report higher immunization rates and more efficient vaccination programs.

Conclusion

The need for a prescription was by far the biggest obstacle to nurses participating in immunization as a result. The statistical removal of this barrier would significantly and favorably impact vaccination rates, with positive effects on the general health and health system as a result. The relationship between nurse competence and vaccination rates in both countries where nurses are allowed to prescribe. Although being prepared is crucial, legislative actions that promote and enhance the willingness of nurses to medicate will lead to higher improvements in immunization rates. Lack of time/priorities competing for nurses' attention and inadequate training were the two next-largest obstacles to their participation in immunizations, as indicated by survey results.

Recommendations

The International Council of Nurses regularly surveys National Nursing Associations know that complaints regarding working pressure, shortages in staff, lack of resources, or opportunities for ongoing professional development are recurring issues. Clearly, more work and policy action are needed, but NNAs should be actively involved in the formulation, development, and evaluation of country policies as they have a key role to play.

A roadmap for access to medications and vaccinations, 2019–2023, is being created by WHO and will comprise activities, actions, and delivery. The International Association of Nurses took an active role in this initiative and promoted nurse prescription, clinical involvement, management in policy making and systems of governance, and recognition of those factors essential to improving the capacity of health care workers, such as higher education and advancement in their careers.

Strategy to subject the Member State practitioner, the International Council of Nurses will continue its lobbying efforts, highlighting the fresh and significant data report and the Possibility of a policy change to support nurses' readiness to prescribe, which could lead to a large increase in vaccination rates, as well as the consequent advantages to health and health systems.

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