Committee: World Health Organization

Topic: Responding to the Opposition to Vaccination

Country: Switzerland Confederation

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We, as the delegation of the Switzerland believe that opposition to vaccination is a big threat for process of the pandemic. We have well developed health care system which upholds the principles of universality and equality through means such as compulsory health insurance. During Covid-19 pandemic we have always tried our best for public n every matter.

Since Edward Jenner’s invention of first modern vaccine, vaccine hesitancy and anti-vaxxers are part of our civilization but persistence of this problem will make us defeat to vaccine-preventable diseases (VPC) which we have already chances to eradicate them. We know eradicating a microorganism is something too hard to do but it is our responsibility to not neglecting public health. For sake of humanity Covid-19 should be eradicated but for this about ninety percent of our population should be vaccinated and at the same time we should consider that currently there are many anti-vaxxers.

The Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) was launched to protect every child on earth by immunizing them against childhood tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and measles. This programme will protect our children from the threat which we can prevent it. We are supporting EPI programme for our children and for our future generations. How we have eradicated variola major (smallpox) with herd immunity, we hope we can eradicate Covid-19 and etc.

Vaccination should continue until the diseases are finally eradicated otherwise VPC diseases will again be prevalent among people. Many anti-vaxxers say that “there is no X disease in my region why should I continue to be vaccinating” but there is also chance that the X disease is continuing to spread in world’s another place so that every people have to be vaccinated for sake of the humanity. Also many anti-vaxxers think “these vaccines may have electronic devices in them” but unfortunately it isn’t possible at all with today's technology. Vaccines’ safety is approved by many trustable organizations such as WHO, Federal Commission for Vaccination (FOPH), CDC and European Medicines Agency. Also vaccines pass 3 phases of testing for the quality of vaccine and while testing vaccines, phases controlled by an independent group for transparency. Scientists are also constantly monitoring information from several sources for any sign that a vaccine may cause health risks.

Culture memory is actually a bit of inclined to forget historical events easily such as wars and pandemics. Also cultural memory can affect us in many ways. For instance, when Covid-19 pandemic began we see that public anxiety have just increased instantly. This anxiety struggled us to passing the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Now we have vaccines which will lead us to the end of the pandemic.

On 28th November we made a referendum for “should precautions and Covid-19 certificate continue” and majority voted for “continue”. With this referendum entering inside places requires vaccination or a PCR test which is negative, otherwise people can’t enter public buildings. Mandatory of vaccines and PCR tests for entering public buildings will be encouraging people to be vaccinated.

Unlike other pandemics this time we have seen that there is a role of media during Covid-19 pandemic. There was also a significant increase in the average using of social media. For example, U.S. users spent on social media in 2020 for 65 minutes daily, compared to 54 minutes and 56 minutes the years before. Media helps us to announce precautions for the pandemic and to trying to give true information’s about Covid-19 but at the same time media also affect people to be anti-vaxxers with pseudoscientific informations. This issue may cause deaths which shouldn’t be. We need to use the media to our advantage and to our disadvantage.

We are always treating differences with respect and we will be continuing with this posture so that we give every people many options to be vaccinated because of their aspects to life. Unless if there is a wrong thought about vaccine, with communication tools we can clarify “what is it true”. For example, some religious groups say that “vaccines contain non-halal ingredients” but it is wrong. Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines don’t contain any animal products. Vaccination isn’t doing through cultural, religious or political reasons, we are doing all these efforts for public health.

Individuals should take their decisions on vaccine not through a random person or something like that. They should research then take the decision maturely so they should do it with their consent. Vaccine hesitant parents should be aware of if their children may have long Covid or any complications, even with a small probability because of Covid-19. We are also thinking that vaccination shouldn’t be delayed otherwise there could be undesirable effects which we don’t appreciate for people.

Some people have concerns about vaccines’ effects. Vaccines’ side effects for a short time like two or one day, are pretty normal. The probability of that you can get bad effects from mRNA vaccines are one out of millions of people rather than dying by Covid-19 for one out of fifty people. For this the minority of people who can’t be vaccinate because of their severe allergic and chronic diseases, we provide other options to be inoculated. Studies show that approved vaccines don’t cause any autism, ASD or any long effect for majority. Vaccine hesitancy people who also think vaccines cause autism, ASD or etc. should be aware of that their thoughts aren’t related to science.

We think social campaigns can spread awareness about VPD and wrong facts about Covid-19 vaccines. For making social campaigns we can work with WHO, Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) and etc. For instance, with help of Unicef, WHO, Gavi and CEPI we, as the high-income countries have shared our vaccines with low-income countries. This programme called COVAX. With COVAX programme we have saved many lives in different places of world and we believe that with this social campaign immunization of humanity from Covid-19 will be covered.

We publish regular reports on mobility, the monitoring of precautionary measures, the economic situation, the implementation of measures, and the wellbeing of members of the public. Each week the cantons (federal states) collect monitoring data on the implementation of precautionary measures on behalf of the FOPH. Having transparent and trustable data is always advantage to our country. We are always getting our steps through public. For preventing deaths from Covid-19, we are overseeing people with help of cantons. These surveillances’ datas used and will be using for science and making new strategies about pandemic. With surveillance of Covid-19, we are aiming about;

1. Adjusting the effectiveness of disease control strategies.
2. Diagnosing problems in vaccine delivery.
3. Identifying high risk areas in population groups.
4. Diagnosing the impact of vaccination on process of pandemic in cantons.
5. Adjusting country's budget for the pandemic.

These are the solutions, we thought about our topic:

1. We think we should use communication tools in order to prevent pseudoscientific information which can affect pandemic process. We can get help from international channels or social media companies.
2. The number social campaigns for eradicating Covid-19 should be funding by governments, NGOs and donations otherwise the awareness of we want will be less attractive among people.
3. Vaccine hesitancy parents should be warned if they don’t want their children being vaccinated. It’s responsibility for all countries for caring their public.
4. Affirmative action should be used people who haven’t been vaccinated. For example, in many countries, including us, used vaccine certificates or something like that for entering public buildings.
5. Safety of vaccine should be seen, learned and searched by anti-vaxxers more gradually. We can do this with the help of internet.

For expected pandemics in the future, we must start to prepare now and first to start with taking lessons from former pandemics and afterwards, we should prevent vaccination hesitations with state manners. To end with we believe if all people have the same purpose and posture about Covid-19, we can eradicate this unmerciful virus from the world.

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