Views on COVID-19 vaccination of young children in Ireland: Results from a cross-sectional survey of parents

Faculty of Public Health Medicine Summer Scientific Meeting

Louise Marron^{1,2}, Annamaria Ferenczi^{2,3}, Katie M O'Brien², Suzanne Cotter², Lucy Jessop¹, Yvonne Morrissey¹, Chantal Migone¹

¹National Immunisation Office

²Health Protection Surveillance Centre

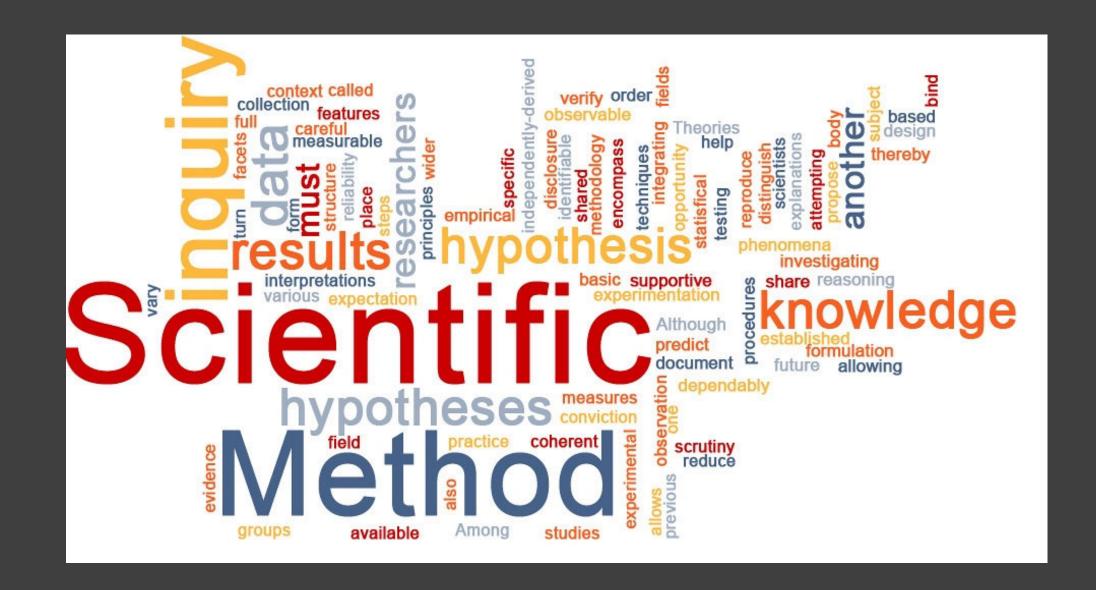
³EPIET Programme ECDC

Introduction and Aim



National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)

- COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for children aged 5 years and older
- Vaccine trials in children aged less than 5 years are underway
- EMA and the FDA are assessing Moderna vaccine for those aged 6 months to less than 6 years
- Parental acceptance of vaccines for this age group is unknown
- The aim of this study was to determine parental attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination among parents of children aged 0-48 months living in Ireland



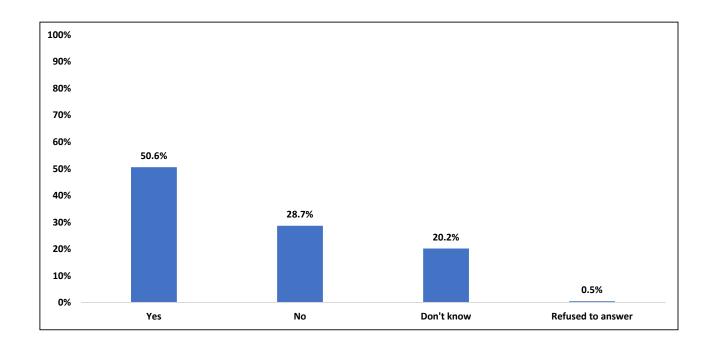
Methods

- Study part of a cross-sectional national survey of parental attitudes towards childhood vaccination
 - Parents of children aged 0-48 months (N=855) were surveyed
 - 7th June to 27th August 2021
- Parents asked if they intended to vaccinate their child against COVID-19
- Association between intention to vaccinate and parental demographic characteristics and vaccine attitudes was examined
- Univariate and multivariable logistic regression models constructed
 - Identify factors associated with intention to vaccinate





Parental intention to get COVID-19 vaccine (N=855)



50.6% of parents intend to vaccinate their child

Demographic predictors of intention to vaccinate

	Unadjusted				Adjusted ^a				
	OR	CI Lower	CI Upper	p-value	aOR	CI Lower	CI Upper	p-value	
Gender Parent									
Male**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Female	0.60	0.41	0.88	0.008	0.59	0.40	0.89	0.011	
Level of Education									
Upper secondary or less**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Vocational or Certificate	0.94	0.60	1.47	0.798	1.09	0.68	1.73	0.730	
Bachelor's degree	1.37	0.90	2.10	0.145	1.22	0.78	1.91	0.390	
Postgraduate or PhD	2.32	1.47	3.67	<0.001	1.80	1.10	2.96	0.020	
Region/Country of Birth									
Ireland**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Northern/Western/Southern	1.17	0.53	2.58	0.705	0.70	0.32	1.54	0.375	
Europe*									
Central/Eastern Europe*	0.23	0.10	0.53	<0.001	0.21	0.09	0.47	<0.001	
Rest of World	1.09	0.56	2.11	0.792	1.13	0.54	2.30	0.764	
Relationship status									
Married**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Single	0.81	0.40	1.64	0.559	1.22	0.55	2.71	0.950	
Co-habiting	0.47	0.28	0.77	0.003	0.55	0.32	0.94	0.029	
Separated/Divorced/Widow	0.21	0.03	1.20	0.078	0.20	0.04	1.06	0.060	

Higher parental intention to vaccinate

• Postgraduate or PhD qualification

Lower parental intention to vaccinate

- Parent being born in a Central or Eastern European country
- Female
- Co-habiting

No difference

- Religion
- · Level of income
- Occupational status
- Child had a chronic illness

Vaccine attitude predictors of intention to vaccinate

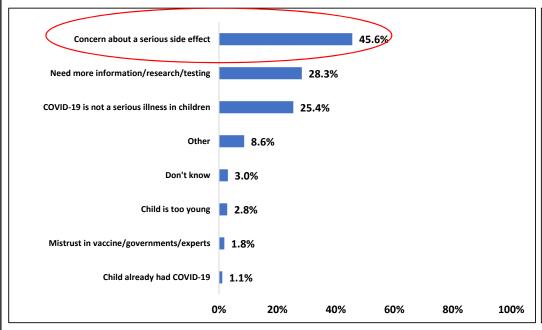
	Unadjusted				Adjusted ^a			
	OR	CI Lower	CI Upper	p-value	aOR	CI Lower	CI Upper	p-value
Belief COVID-19 can be a serio	ous illness	in children						
No**	-	-	· -	-	-		-	-
Yes	6.43	3.87	10.70	<0.001	4.88	2.68	8.91	<0.001
Don't know	1.60	0.79	3.25	0.192	1.40	0.64	3.12	0.397
Vaccine scores								
Vaccine importance score	4.05	2.66	6.15	<0.001	2.25	1.28	3.95	0.005
Vaccine safety score	2.09	1.67	2.62	< 0.001	1.57	1.17	2.12	0.003
Trust in official sources score	2.15	1.72	2.68	<0.001	1.40	1.06	1.85	0.017
Vaccine convenience score	1.69	1.31	2.17	<0.001	0.96	0.69	1.35	0.819

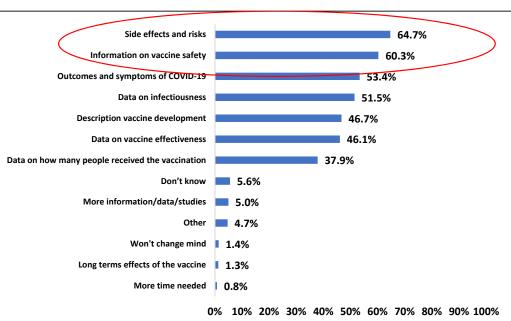
Higher parental intention to vaccinate

- Belief that COVID-19 could be a serious illness in children
- Belief in the importance and safety of childhood vaccination generally
- Trusting in official (HSE and government) vaccine information sources

Reasons for not intending to vaccinate child (N=245)

Further information to assist decision making (N=422)





Concern about safety and side effects influenced parental decision making

Public Health Implications

- Findings are important to inform the COVID-19 national immunisation programme
 - If 0-4 year age-group included
 - For parents of older children
 - Uptake among children aged 5-11 years currently 22.2%
 - Only 7.8% in those aged 5 years



- Information and communication to parents tailored to take into account the findings of this survey
 - Particularly in relation to need for further information on vaccine side effects and safety
- Findings important to inform the development of supporting materials for HCPs advising parents
 - · Particularly as one in five parents undecided
- Need for targeted messaging
 - Parents of children with chronic illness
 - Mothers
 - Parents from Central and Eastern European countries
- Results can assist in tailoring the provision of information to parents' needs
 - For current and future COVID-19 immunisation programmes for children in Ireland

Thank You