

Key Challenges for Eradication of Poliomyelitis in Ukraine

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Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the epidemic situation on poliomyelitis in the world is not good. Ukraine is on the list of countries certified by WHO as the territory free of polio, and previously, population coverage with scheduled vaccination against polio was 95%.

Methods

Annual official reports on morbidity and reports on prophylactic vaccination and medical cards of the patients with acute flaccid paralysis over a period of 10 years in the Carpathian region were used to perform analysis in our study. The Carpathian region belongs to risk group as it is the area of intensive migration and a low rate of immunization. Our research was focused on the following: to study current surveillance over poliomyelitis and to analyze the implementation of actions regarding the status of Ukraine to be free of polio.

Results

In the past, from 2 to 305 (in 1957) cases of polio were registered in Zakarpattye region. From 1999- 2014, sixty-one cases of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) were registered there. The number of registered AFP cases varies from 3 to 7 in different years.

We conducted analysis on vaccination coverage against polio among children of one year-old (polio-4) and obtained the following results: in 2005 - 97,4% of children were vaccinated, in 2006- 99,6%, in 2007 - 98,6%, in 2008 - 96,2%, in 2009 - 88,4%, in 2010 - 65,5%, in 2011- 61,6%, in 2012 - 48,0%, in 2013 - 82,2% and in 2014 the percentage of vaccinated children made up only 42,1%.

In 2014, the total scope of vaccination of the Ukrainian population was less than 60 %.

Conclusions

As a result of our study, we found there were a large number of unvaccinated children who should be vaccinated. According to the WHO, Ukraine is one of the countries with high risk of spreading "wild" polio virus if it is imported.

A national strategy designed to support the polio-free status of Ukraine should include high vaccination coverage using OPV (oral polio vaccine), developing additional mass vaccination actions or introducing national days of immunization, and developing effective surveillance and immunization among risk groups.

Keywords

poliomyelitis; vaccination; surveillance

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