NEWS UPDATE – 7-14 August 2013

Objective 1: increase in seasonal vaccine use

How do anticipated worry and regret predict seasonal influenza vaccination uptake among Chinese adults?
Vaccine, Volume 31, Issue 38, Pages 4055-4216 (28 August 2013)
Original Research Article, Pages 4084-4090, Q. Liao, W.S. Wong, R. Fielding
The study tested two hypothesized models of how anticipated affect, cognitive risk estimate and vaccination intention might influence vaccination uptake against seasonal influenza. The results suggest that anticipated affect seems to drive risk estimates related to seasonal influenza vaccination rather than vice versa and intention remains an important mediator of the associations of anticipated affect and cognitive risk estimate with vaccination uptake against seasonal influenza.

Unequal access to vaccines in the WHO European Region during the A(H1N1) influenza pandemic in 2009
Vaccine, Volume 31, Issue 38, Pages 4055-4216 (28 August 2013), Pernille Jorgensen et al.
The study concluded that among the 51 countries responding to the survey, the majority (84%) implemented vaccination campaigns against A(H1N1)pdm09, however, time of vaccine receipt and number of doses varied substantially across the region, with delayed access in many countries especially in those in the lowest income range.

Potential influence of seasonal influenza vaccination requirement versus traditional vaccine promotion strategies on unvaccinated healthcare personnel
Vaccine, Volume 31, Issue 37, Pages 3763-4054 (20 August 2013)
Original Research Article, Pages 3915-3921, Mark G. Thompson, et al.
In a prospective cohort study of 1670 healthcare personnel (HCP) providing direct patient care at Scott & White Healthcare in Texas and Kaiser Permanente Northwest in Oregon and Washington, the scientists examined the potential impact of twelve vaccine promotion strategies on the likelihood of being vaccinated. In all cases, significantly more unvaccinated HCP reported that a vaccination requirement would increase the likelihood of vaccination than reported a targeted intervention would have this effect.

Jabs helping make flu rare
New Zealand Herald, 11 August 2013
If you’ve come down with a dose of the flu this winter, you can consider yourself one of the unlucky few. Flu rates have plummeted as increased vaccination, mild weather and better hygiene keep the spread of bugs at bay. Canterbury District Health Board virologist Dr Lance Jennings said national health monitoring showed flu had lessened its grip this year.

Flu vaccine not tied to pregnancy complications
9 Aug 2013 | Reuters
Pregnant women who get flu shots are at no greater risk for complications like high blood pressure, urinary tract infection or gestational diabetes, according to a new U.S. study.
Also Original article at Obstetrics & Gynecology

Study: H1N1 infection unlikely to contribute to vaccine-linked narcolepsy
Aug 8 PLoS One
Infection with pandemic 2009 H1N1 (pH1N1) flu did not appear to raise the risk of narcolepsy in Europeans who received the adjuvanted Pandemrix vaccine, which has been linked to narcolepsy in several European nations, according to a study yesterday in PLoS One.
Record numbers immunised against the flu

Associate Health Minister Jo Goodhew has announced that more Kiwis than ever before protected themselves against the flu this year. The 2013 Influenza Programme ended on 31 July with a total of 1,253,830 flu vaccines distributed. This number even exceeds the 1.02 million doses distributed in 2010 following the 2009 flu pandemic.

Objective 3: research and development

The comparative effectiveness of adjuvanted and unadjuvanted trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (TIV) in the elderly

An MF59 adjuvanted vaccine provided significantly improved protection against influenza in the elderly.

Immunogenicity, reactogenicity and safety of an inactivated quadrivalent influenza vaccine candidate versus inactivated trivalent influenza vaccine

QIV provided superior immunogenicity for the additional B strain compared with TIV, without interfering with antibody responses to the three shared antigens. The additional antigen did not appear to alter the safety profile of QIV compared with TIV. This suggests that the candidate QIV is a viable alternative to TIV for use in adults, and could potentially improve protection against influenza B.

Outbreak news

Grippes aviaires et porcines : faut-il craindre une pandémie ?

Le Dr Tcherakian présente les notions clefs pour comprendre les mécanismes des pandémies grippales, et souligne les spécificités du virus H7N9.

Evolution of influenza A virus H7 and N9 subtypes, Eastern Asia

The purpose of this study was to investigate the recent evolutionary history of H7 and N9 virus subtypes in eastern Asia and identify the most recent wild bird ancestor of influenza A(H7N9) virus hemagglutinin and neuraminidase.

R292K substitution and drug susceptibility of influenza A(H7N9) viruses

The recent emergence of an avian influenza A(H7N9) virus causing human infections in China (1,2) is of global concern. As with any emergent influenza virus, it is critical to assess the susceptibility of the influenza A(H7N9) outbreak virus to antiviral drugs, which are the first line of defense before an effective vaccine becomes available.

Blood samples hint at silent H7N9 in poultry workers

A serology study in a Chinese province hit hardest by novel H7N9 influenza found evidence of asymptomatic or mild infections in poultry workers, further strengthening suspicions that poultry are the source of the outbreak. The study focused on members of the general public, poultry workers, and patients with lab-confirmed H7N9 infections in Zhejiang province, which has
recorded 45 cases during the outbreak thus far. The Chinese researchers published their findings in the Aug 9 early online edition of the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*.

**Guangdong confirms human H7N9 infection case**
*China Daily*, 10 August 2013

A human infection with the H7N9 strain of avian influenza was confirmed in South China's Guangdong province, Guangdong's health department said Saturday. Sample of a 51-year-old woman tested positive for the H7N9 virus at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention on Saturday, confirming the results of tests conducted by the Guangdong provincial center for disease control and prevention on Friday, the department said in a statement.

**H3N2 flu outbreak reported at Arkansas cancer facility**
*Robert Roos | News Editor | CIDRAP News | Aug 07, 2013*

A flu outbreak at an Arkansas cancer facility sparked concern about the possibility of H3N2v.