



On 27 April 2013, the CPME Board adopted the 'CPME Policy on Childhood Immunisation' (CPME 2013/035 FINAL)

CPME Policy on Childhood Immunisation

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) reaffirms¹ that the prevention of communicable diseases through vaccination is safe and effective. CPME confirms its full support for the objective to eliminate measles and rubella in the European region² by 2015 and maintain the region's polio-free status.

Medical practice & training

- CPME affirms that doctors and nurses have a vital role to play in encouraging vaccination uptake and should be pro-active advocates of immunisation. Doctors should make use of every opportunity to reach out to the relevant groups to communicate the importance and safety of vaccination.
- Professional bodies should consolidate the promotion of immunisation according to national schedules in professional guidelines and monitor their implementation. Doctors should be encouraged to assess the need for vaccinations in addition to national schedules according to the health status of each individual patient.
- Immunisation according to national schedules should be decoupled from financial incentives which risk implying a conflict of interest.
- Doctors and other healthcare professionals should ensure they themselves are vaccinated according to national schedules.
- Medical training at all levels should underline the importance of immunisation and provide education on vaccine-preventable diseases and their complications.

¹ Please also consult the following CPME policies:

- [CPME points in response to the Commission consultation document "Better medicines for children"](#), adopted in 2002
- [Motion on the prevention of infectious diseases](#), adopted in 2000
- [Specific recommendations on preventive medicine](#), adopted in 1993
- [Declaration on preventive medicine](#), adopted in 1984

² as defined by WHO-Europe



Communication & Outreach

- The communication of high quality, up-to-date, evidence-based information is a vital component in increasing vaccination uptake. Public authorities at national level should work in close cooperation with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and WHO-Europe in order to develop and disseminate information that is easily accessible and understandable.
- Special consideration should be devoted to information which is disseminated online, including social media. It must be ensured that high quality, up-to-date, evidence-based information is easily accessible through web search engines. Ideally, related online discussions are monitored and moderated.
- Particular attention should be paid to communication with 'hard-to-reach' population groups with low vaccination uptake, including vaccination sceptics. Information on access to and safety of vaccinations should be tailored for each group's needs. Especially for vulnerable groups, whose ties with the formal healthcare system may be weak, information must be provided in a context and format best suited to their needs.
- Stakeholders, in particular doctors and representatives of 'hard-to-reach' population groups, should be involved in the development of information campaigns.
- Good practices on communication to 'hard to reach' population groups, e.g. the identification of 'immunisation ambassadors', should be exchanged between the Member States.

Governance & Cooperation

- The cooperation between public authorities at national level, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and WHO-Europe should be supported and enhanced.
- Cooperation at EU level should work towards a European immunisation schedule. Existing national immunisation schedules should enshrine the most up-to-date scientific knowledge and should be supported by a pro-active implementation strategy with a view to achieving as high an uptake as possible. A formal framework for cooperation between public authorities and representatives of the medical profession should be set up to support these objectives.
- Promotion of and support for research on vaccinations should be facilitated at all governance levels and embedded in a framework for cooperation in order to avoid duplication.
- At both EU and national level, the procurement of vaccines should be subject to the greatest possible transparency.