# Parental perceptions on childhood vaccination and vaccines uptake.

## Results from patient survey.

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## Introduction:

In 2019 WHO listed vaccine hesitancy as one of the top ten threats to global health (World Health Organisation, 2019). There is evidence of reduced uptake of routine immunisation in the local population of East Lancashire Hospital trust (ELHT) (Public Health England, 2019). Previous evidence suggests that perception influences decision to vaccinate (World Health Organisation, 2019). With the current antivax movement, there is an urge to address parental perceptions.

## Aims:

1. To explore the parental perceptions of childhood vaccinations at ELHT.
2. To improve parental understanding of vaccination and associated risks and benefits by developing a resource.

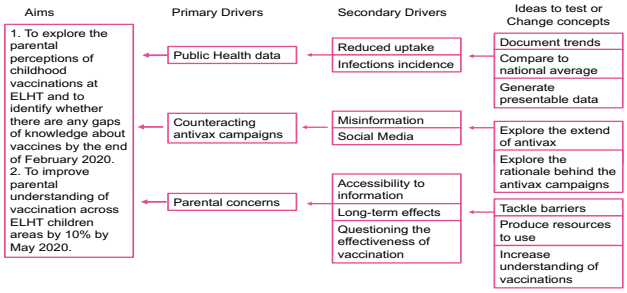


Image 1. Drivers Diagram outlining potential contributing factors to parental perceptions with potential targeted solutions.

## Methods

The baseline data was collected via anonymous questionnaire from parents at COAU and at Children's Ward. The sample size was set at 50. The survey took place between January and February 2021. Based on the feedback received from parents, we developed patient information resource that can be used by stakeholders in the community. We conducted another survey inviting parents who left their contact details to give us feedback on the content of the leaflet.

## Results

98% of participants' children are up to date with the vaccines.

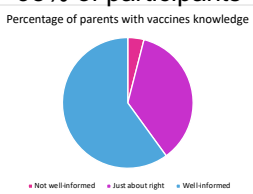


Diagram 1. Vaccines knowledge.

60% of parents feel that they are well-informed about vaccines, 4% don't think they are, with 36% have just about the right amount of information (Diagram 1).

64% of parents report being well-informed about the diseases vaccines protect from, 36% would like to have more information (Diagram 2).

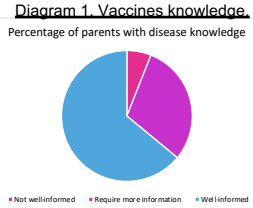


Diagram 2. Diseases knowledge.

The most common reasons for parents to withhold vaccination is an association with potential behaviour and neurological problems (32%), vaccine's non-effectiveness (16%) and harm to immunity (11%).

All of the parents participating in the online survey reported knowledge improvement after reading the resource (Image 2). Although, there was no specific feedback on improvement, one parent mentioned that the use of photos was a good strategy to emphasize the importance of vaccines.

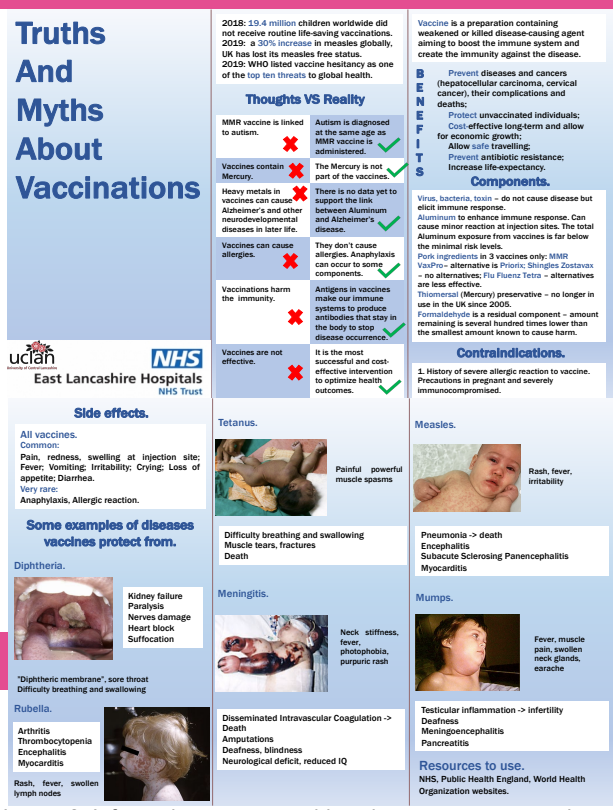


Image 2. Information resource addressing common parental misconceptions.

## Conclusions

We used a patients' survey methodology to explore parental misconceptions about the safety and the risks associated with vaccinations. A lot of parents are worried about the side-effects of vaccines and lack awareness about the diseases that vaccines protect from.

Our results suggest that campaigns promoting vaccinations in communities should emphasize more on benefits rising from disease-prevention as well as myths about the side effects used by the anti-vaccine campaigners. Taking this into account, we developed a patient's resource that is focusing on vaccinations, but also uses information and photographic images of the diseases the vaccines prevent.

World Health Organisation. (2019). *Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals.* Available at https://www.who.int/immunization/global_vaccine_action_plan/en/
World Health Organisation. (2019). *Ten threats to global health in 2019.* Available at https://www.who.int/emergencies/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019
Public Health England (2019). *Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics.* Available from NHS Digital website https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiZTI3NWZhNzItMTIyZS00OWM2LTg0MzMtOGY5YTJjMGY0MjI1IiwidCI6IjUwZjYwNzFmLWJiZmUtNDAxYS04ODAzLTY3Mzc0OGU2MjlMiIsImMiOjh9