AUDIT ON COMMUNICATION WITH BENEFICIARIES DURING IMMUNIZATION VISIT

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OBJECTIVES

Immunization is a cornerstone of paediatric healthcare, significantly contributing to disease prevention and control. This audit aimed to evaluate communication practices during immunisation visits, providing insights into factors contributing to missed and delayed vaccinations. By understanding these barriers, we can enhance our outreach strategies and improve immunisation rates among children.

METHODS

In this audit, we observed 50 children aged 6 weeks to 10 years during their immunization visits in a government hospital in Delhi. Following the guidelines set forth by the Immunisation Handbook for Health Workers published by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2018, effective communication during these visits should cover four key points:

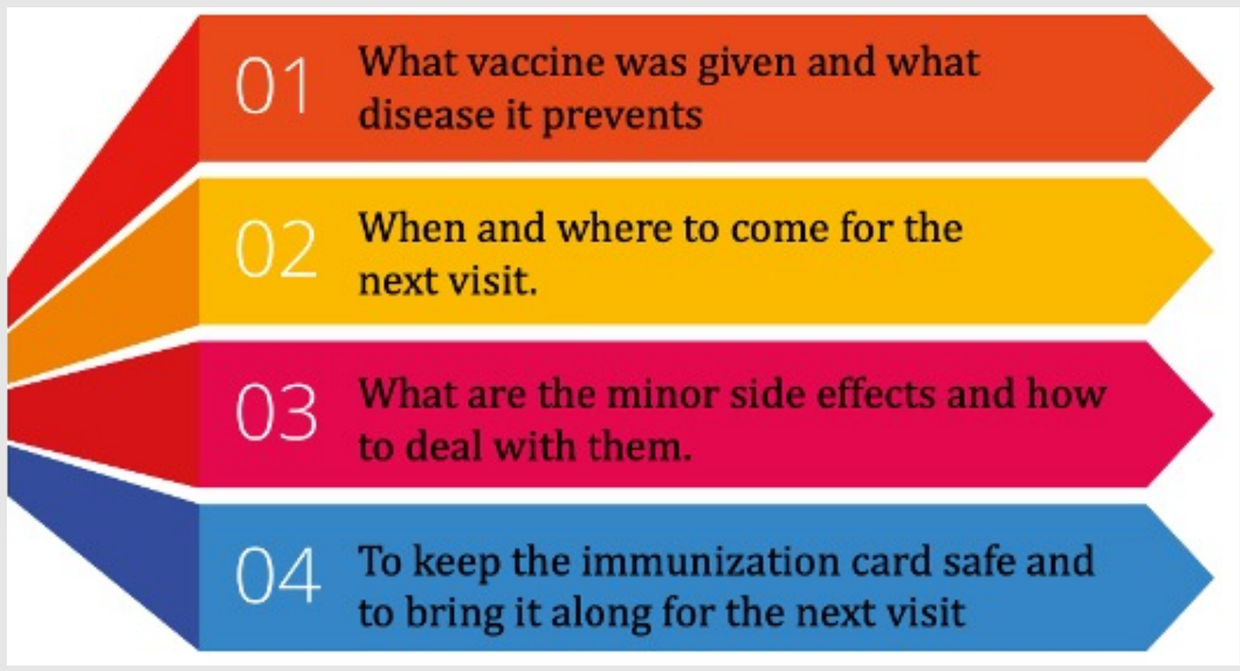
1. The vaccine being administered and the disease it prevents.
2. Details regarding the timing and location of the next visit.
3. Information on potential minor side effects and management strategies.
4. The importance of keeping the immunisation card safe and bringing it for future visits.

During these visits, the communication practices of healthcare professionals were systematically observed and assessed using a standardised checklist.

RESULTS

The observed cohort of 50 children ranged in age from 6 weeks to 10 years, with the following age distribution: 6 weeks (16%), 10 weeks (12%), 14 weeks (18%), 9 months (24%), 16-24 months (16%), 5 years (8%), and 10 years (6%).

Communication outcomes revealed that 80% of beneficiaries were informed about the vaccine being administered and the diseases it prevents. Additionally, 66% were informed about when and where to return for the next visit. Information regarding minor side effects and their management was provided to 60% of beneficiaries, while 64% were advised to keep their immunisation cards safe and bring them to subsequent visits.



CONCLUSIONS

Ineffective communication regarding vaccine-preventable diseases, immunization schedules, and potential minor side effects can lead to delays and incomplete vaccinations in children. A gap in communication not only affects individual vaccination rates but also poses a risk to community immunity, potentially leading to outbreaks of preventable diseases. To mitigate these issues, it is crucial to prioritize effective communication as a foundational element of immunization programs. This includes training healthcare providers in clear, empathetic communication techniques, ensuring they have sufficient time to engage with families, and providing educational materials that parents can reference.

References
Immunization Handbook for Healthcare workers, 2018 by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, under National Health Mission.