

## **A questionnaire study of pregnant women and healthcare professionals on influenza and pertussis vaccination**

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### **Objective**

Uptake rates of antenatal vaccination remain obscure in Greece. The aim of the current study is to assess vaccination coverage against influenza and pertussis during pregnancy and further to investigate the awareness and knowledge of healthcare professionals (HCPs).

### **Methods**

The study involved 370 pregnant women and 34 HCPs from the region of Heraklion, Crete, over a 4-month period (January 2019-April 2019). Questionnaires were distributed to postpartum women and HCPs respectively, within 3 obstetric clinics.

### **Results**

Uptake of influenza and pertussis vaccination was 30% (113/370) and 3% (13/370) respectively. Lack of maternal information concerning vaccination during pregnancy (75% for influenza, 93% for pertussis) represents the major reason for suboptimal immunization. 85% of obstetricians recommended influenza vaccination and 61% for pertussis. 4% of mothers had been vaccinated during previous pregnancies. Out of 34 HCPs (18 Midwives, 16 Obstetricians), 6 (17.6%) would decline vaccination for pertussis and 1 (3%) for influenza, due to the "fear for possible side effects". Regarding the confidence/willingness for practicing the cocooning technique (vaccinating family members and any individuals who would come into regular contact with the newborn infant), 40% declared that they would participate.

### **Conclusion**

The uptake rates of antenatal vaccination are lower in the region of Heraklion, Crete compared to other European places (92% in South England). Education of HCPs is essential in order to promote vaccination strategies into routine antenatal care.