



Boosting HPV vaccination in Lithuania through SMS outreach

Declining HPV vaccination rates among 11- and 12-year-olds in Lithuania highlighted the need for a targeted solution. To address this challenge and to achieve an annual 4% increase in vaccination uptake, health authorities launched a pilot initiative that used SMS reminders and digital information packages to reach parents and guardians. The pilot aimed to address issues like lack of awareness and misinformation about HPV vaccination, ensuring families had timely, accurate information about HPV vaccination schedules.

This pilot initiative, funded by the European Union through the 'Overcoming Obstacles to Vaccination' project, was rolled out in phases, beginning with the collection of phone numbers and the preparation of information packages. To implement the pilot, 2,549 SMS messages were sent to families, each including a link to the citizen online health platform, which provided detailed information on HPV vaccination.

This initiative was made possible through collaboration with key partners, including the Ministry of Health, the Registry Centre, the National Public Health Centre, and Klaipeda City Municipality. The involvement of healthcare professionals and local authorities was essential to the pilot's success.

Building trust through effective messaging

One of the key lessons learnt from the observed low opening rate of the messages by citizen is that the way information is delivered is crucial for building trust and engaging the population effectively. As a result, stakeholders are considering using an online health application for future campaigns.

The *Overcoming Obstacles to Vaccination* project also enabled the health authority to gain valuable insights into implementing reminder schemes. Mutual learning activities and in-depth visits provided an invaluable space to exchange knowledge and best practices on sending vaccine reminders, inspiring the health authority to adopt similar practices in Lithuania. Insights were further strengthened through a citizen survey, which highlighted the need for more information on vaccination and schedules and improved understanding of how to communicate this information effectively to the population.

The pilot demonstrated strong potential for replication in other regions facing similar challenges. Results showed that this approach could be adapted and scaled across Lithuania. By automating the sending of reminders, healthcare practitioners could save resources typically spent on manually contacting families. Additionally, delivering information packages could help address similar barriers in other counties, potentially increasing vaccination coverage at the national level.

Overcoming Obstacles to Vaccination across the EU



"Overcoming Obstacles to Vaccination" is a three-year EU-funded project that aims to boost vaccination coverage by tackling physical, practical, and administrative barriers to seven key vaccines, including COVID-19, HPV (Human Papillomavirus), and MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella). The project identified effective practices across EU Member States, piloted them in countries facing similar challenges, and developed tailored recommendations for policymakers, health authorities, professionals, and citizens.