

Publication

Sociocultural determinants of anticipated vaccine acceptance for acute watery diarrhea in early childhood in katanga province, democratic republic of Congo

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Abstract. Rotavirus and oral cholera vaccines have the potential to reduce diarrhea-related child mortality in low-income settings and are recommended by the World Health Organization. Uptake of vaccination depends on community support, and is based on local priorities. This study investigates local perceptions of acute watery diarrhea in childhood and anticipated vaccine acceptance in two sites in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2010, 360 randomly selected non-affected adults were interviewed by using a semi-structured questionnaire. Witchcraft and breastfeeding were perceived as potential cause of acute watery diarrhea by 51% and 48% of respondents. Despite misperceptions, anticipated vaccine acceptance at no cost was 99%. The strongest predictor of anticipated vaccine acceptance if costs were assumed was the educational level of the respondents. Results suggest that the introduction of vaccines is a local priority and local (mis)perceptions of illness do not compromise vaccine acceptability if the vaccine is affordable.

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