

Webinar Report



Vaccination Across Lifespans: Understanding Adult and Infant Immunisation Needs

April 3, 2025

Event code: W11VPD

About this report

This report presents the key findings and discussions from the webinar "Vaccination Across Lifespans: Understanding Adult and Infant Immunisation Needs," organised by the Infectious Disease Alliance (IDA) on April 3, 2025. The webinar brought together leading experts in immunisation, public health, and policy to explore strategies for strengthening vaccination programs across all life stages. Discussions focused on overcoming barriers to vaccine uptake, integrating immunisation into healthcare systems, and ensuring equitable access to vaccines for both infants and adults.

The event featured insights from Dr. Bolette Søborg, Deputy Director and Head of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases at Statens Serum Institut, Dr. Catherine Weil-Olivier, Board Member of the Coalition for Life-Course Immunisation, Dr. Litjen (L.J.) Tan, Chief Policy and Partnerships Officer at Immunize.org, and Esong Sandra, Executive Director at GooFirm.

This report is structured to reflect the core themes discussed during the webinar. It includes an overview of the event's objectives, speakers, and agenda, along with key takeaways from the presentations. Additionally, it highlights engagement metrics and provides actionable recommendations for policymakers, healthcare providers, and civil society organisations working to advance immunisation efforts. IDA remains committed to fostering inclusive dialogue and actionable solutions in global health. This report serves as a resource for stakeholders advocating for stronger vaccination policies and improved immunisation coverage across all age groups.

***This webinar report was compiled by:
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Background on vaccine-preventable diseases

Vaccination is essential for disease prevention at all stages of life. While childhood immunisation programs are well-established globally, adult vaccinations often remain under-prioritised. The impact of preventable diseases on adults highlights the need for comprehensive immunisation strategies. Similarly, infant vaccinations play a crucial role in reducing child mortality and controlling disease outbreaks. As societies age, life-course immunisation becomes a critical public health strategy. Additionally, maintaining older adults' health through vaccination can increase workforce productivity and contribute to economic growth. Despite these benefits, adult vaccination rates remain low due to various barriers, including misinformation, lack of access, and inadequate policy prioritisation. Comprehensive immunisation strategies must be developed to integrate vaccination across all life stages, ensuring that individuals remain protected against preventable diseases from infancy to old age.

Introduction

On April 3, 2025, the Infectious Disease Alliance (IDA) hosted a webinar titled "*Vaccination Across Lifespans: Understanding Adult and Infant Immunisation Needs.*" The event featured leading experts who shared their insights on the importance of vaccination across lifespans, strategies to improve vaccination coverage, and community outreach vaccination programs. The webinar aimed to highlight innovative approaches and promote collaborations to accelerate progress in the fight against vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs).

Registered
webinar
attendees

33



Geographical
reach

Europe,
Africa,
North
America,
and Asia



Total
webinar
attendees

25



The objective of this webinar

To bring together global health experts, researchers, and policymakers to discuss innovative strategies for the prevention of VPDs and future of vaccination strategies.

The webinar aimed to:

- Highlight the importance of vaccinations across different life stages, with a focus on infants and adults.
- Discuss common barriers to vaccination uptake and strategies to overcome them
- Share successful models for integrating adult and infant vaccination into healthcare systems.
- Explore the role of healthcare providers, policymakers, and communities in ensuring vaccination equity.

Through expert presentations and an interactive Q&A session, the webinar sought to facilitate knowledge-sharing, promote evidence-based solutions, and encourage actionable commitments to tackle VPDs effectively.

Key speakers & topics

- **Dr. Bolette Søborg**, Deputy Director and Head of Vaccine Preventable Diseases at Statens Serum Institut, on Danish life-course immunisation strategies.
- **Dr. Litjen (L.J.) Tan**, Chief Policy and Partnerships Officer at Immunize.org, on overcoming barriers to life-course vaccination and operationalising immunisation throughout the year.
- **Esong Sandra**, Executive Director at GooFirm, on community outreach and immunisation programs.
- **Dr. Catherine Weil-Olivier**, Board Member of the Coalition for Life-Course Immunisation, on the importance of a life-course approach to vaccination, focusing on older adults.



Summary & key takeaways of the webinar

Dr. Bolette Søborg, Understanding Adult and Infant Immunisation Needs in Denmark

Dr. Bolette Søborg, Deputy Director and Head of the Vaccine-Preventable Disease unit at Statens Serum Institut in Copenhagen, Denmark, shared her insights on adult and infant immunisation programs in the Danish context. To begin, Dr. Søborg introduced the Danish context surrounding vaccination. While the SSI recognises the importance of lifespan and adult immunisation, and Denmark has a robust childhood vaccination program, Denmark lacks a national adult vaccination strategy. Despite this, the country has relatively high rates of vaccine coverage. However, Dr. Søborg highlighted how adult vaccination rates may be improved and key barriers include a low perception of risk among adults, limited provider recommendations, and logistical and systemic barriers in vulnerable populations. She touched on the topic of vaccine hesitancy, reiterating the sentiment that a high level of public trust and transparency from medical professionals is paramount to reducing hesitancy and encouraging vaccination uptake. Lastly, Dr. Søborg advised that national health plans integrate lifespan vaccination with a stronger focus on adult immunisation, supported by ongoing investment in surveillance and communication. She stressed the importance of cross-sector collaboration, prioritising equity and access, and sharing best practices globally to ensure collective progress.

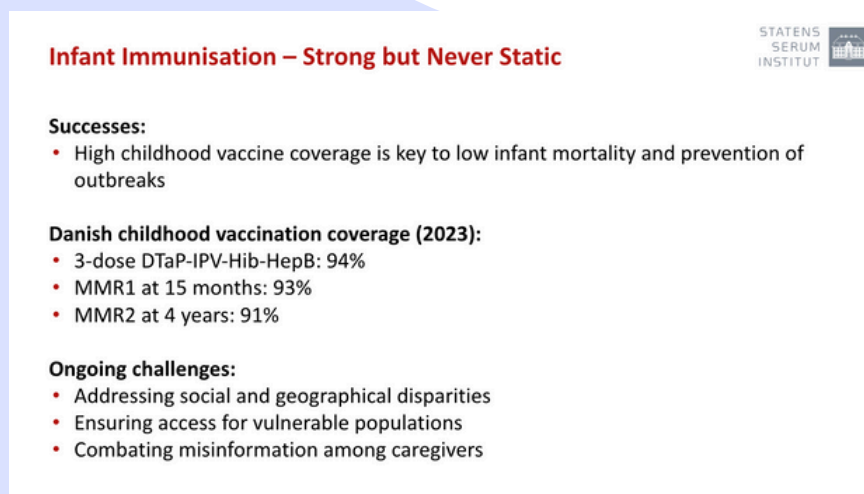


Figure 1: Infant Immunisation in Denmark

Dr. Litjen (L.J) Tan, Strategies for Improving Adult immunisation Rates:

Dr. Litjen (L.J) Tan, Chief Policy and Partnerships Officer for Immunize.org, discussed key strategies to overcome barriers to immunisation, categorising them into the health system, healthcare professional, patient, and policy-level strategies. He emphasised the importance of system-wide improvements such as enhancing immunisation registries, increasing awareness among all healthcare staff, leveraging technology for data sharing, and incentivising vaccination efforts. He highlighted the critical role of healthcare professionals in vaccine advocacy, stressing that trusted providers must actively recommend vaccines, simplify messaging, and address disparities through community outreach. Regarding patient strategies, he underscored the need for personalised communication to combat vaccine hesitancy, framing immunisation as both cost-saving and life-saving. At the policy level, Dr. Tan called for eliminating financial barriers to vaccination and advocated for a year-round approach to adult immunisation rather than concentrating efforts solely during flu season. He concluded by reinforcing the power of healthcare professionals' recommendations in building vaccine confidence and urged continued collaboration to improve global vaccine access.

What works: From NFID Call To Action (September 2024)

- Healthcare Professional Strategies
 - Simplify vaccine recommendations
 - Emphasize the importance of healthcare professional endorsement
 - Broaden specialist outreach
 - Address disparities
 - Expand clinical support for vaccination



Available at:
<https://www.nfid.org/resource/call-to-action-strategies-to-improve-adult-immunization-in-the-us/>. Accessed: April 1, 2025.

Figure 2: Strategies to Increase Adult Immunisation, Healthcare Providers

Esong Sandra, Community Outreach Programs Towards Vaccination: Strategies to Improve Global Vaccination Coverage

Esong Sandra, Executive Director at GooFirm, outlined community outreach strategies to improve vaccine access, including mobile clinics, door-to-door vaccination, and integrating immunisation with routine health checkups. She highlighted the importance of engaging trusted community figures (such as religious leaders and teachers) to advocate for vaccines and cited strategies to address concerns through public forums. Public awareness campaigns using social media, radio, billboards, and local-language messaging were also proposed to counter misinformation. Incentive programs, such as offering small rewards or combining vaccination efforts with food distribution, were recommended to boost participation. She also stressed the need for policy and financial initiatives, including government subsidies, insurance mandates, and international partnerships to expand vaccine access. Strengthening healthcare infrastructure, improving cold chain logistics, and integrating adult and childhood immunisation services were key strategies. She concluded by citing successful vaccination programs, such as polio eradication and COVID-19 campaigns, as models for improving global immunisation coverage. Ultimately, collaboration among governments, healthcare professionals, and communities remains essential to ensuring vaccines are accessible and widely accepted.

Community Outreach Programs

- Mobile and pop-up vaccination clinics
- Community Engagement Programs
- Public Awareness Campaigns
- Incentives & Support Programs
- Partnerships with NGOs & Businesses

Figure 3: Community Outreach Vaccination Programs

Dr. Catherine Weil-Olivier, Vaccination at All Ages

Dr. Catherine Weil-Olivier, board member of the Coalition for Lifecourse Immunisation and Honorary Professor of Paediatrics at Paris VII University in France, discussed the importance and unique challenges associated with vaccinating older adults. She began by emphasising the growing aging population and the increased burden of chronic diseases, which heighten susceptibility to vaccine-preventable illnesses. She stressed the importance of catch-up immunisation, regular boosters, and new vaccines for older adults while acknowledging challenges like immunosenescence, low vaccine uptake, and inconsistent recommendations across countries. Further, she shared that while France has recently introduced routine pneumococcal and herpes vaccines for those 65+, uptake remains low. Efforts to improve vaccination rates include expanding pharmacist and nurse vaccination roles, better public communication, and school-based programs for vaccines like HPV. Encouragingly, hesitancy appears to be declining, but barriers remain, such as a lack of awareness among healthcare professionals and fragmented vaccine policies. To address these issues, she called for stronger data collection, enhanced vaccine development, political and financial support, and greater public engagement. She concluded by emphasising that successful immunisation strategies require a multi-faceted approach, integrating trust-building, transparent communication, and community outreach to ensure a lifelong commitment to vaccination.

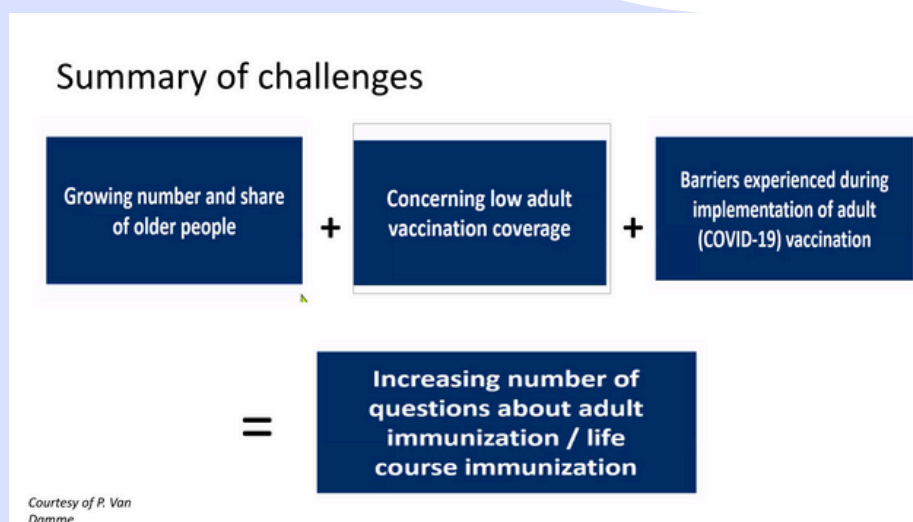


Figure 4: Challenges in Vaccinating Older Adults

Question and Answer Session, Moderated by Dr. Norman Begg

Dr. Norman Begg, vaccine consultant and IDA vaccine-preventable disease committee advisor, moderated and posed questions to the four key speakers.

When asked what successful vaccination model could be taken from Denmark and adapted in other European contexts, Dr. Søborg discussed Denmark's successful efforts to address low HPV vaccination coverage. She shared that these initiatives, which include a structured strategy to combat vaccine hesitancy, could be applied globally. She mentioned that Denmark had even assisted France in implementing a similar approach.

Dr. Begg then asked Dr. Tan how to prioritize healthcare provider recommendations in improving vaccination uptake. In his response, Dr. Tan emphasized the importance of healthcare providers' endorsement in encouraging vaccination. He stressed the need for educating healthcare professionals on the benefits of immunization so that they genuinely believe in the importance of vaccines. Dr. Tan suggested implementing systems changes, such as reminder systems or standing orders, which make it easier for healthcare providers to offer vaccines during patient visits.

Dr. Begg then asked Esong Sandra to share her experience with community outreach vaccination programs for pregnant women. Dr. Sandra shared her work in Cameroon, where pregnant women are encouraged to take necessary vaccines through the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program. She highlighted the challenges faced by pregnant women, such as financial constraints, and explained how the UHC initiative offers free services to women, encouraging vaccination during their visits. Follow-up is provided to ensure full vaccination coverage.

Lastly, Dr. Begg asked Dr. Weil-Olivier to expand on the trend of vaccine hesitancy declining in adult populations. Dr. Weil-Olivier discussed a paradox: vaccine hesitancy is decreasing in adults but increasing in children. She explained that during disease outbreaks, such as the summer's measles epidemic, vaccination uptake in pregnant women increased dramatically, demonstrating that fear of the disease often outweighs fear of the vaccine. However, the situation is different for adolescents and young adults, who are harder to reach. Dr. Weil-Olivier noted the importance of targeted communication strategies, such as using video content tailored to adolescents, to increase vaccine uptake.



Figure 5: Question and Answer Session

Plan for continued engagement

- **Follow-up communication:** Share a post-event package with participants, including the event report, recording, and next steps.
- **Stakeholder network development:** Establish a platform for continued dialogue and collaboration among participants.
- **Periodic webinars and workshops:** Organize follow-up events to monitor progress and explore new innovations in preventing and addressing VPDs.

[Click here to watch the recordings of this webinar](#)

Call to action

Protecting global health security by restoring funding for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Dear Global Health advocates, leaders and organisations,

Vaccination is a cornerstone of public health, yet significant disparities persist in access and uptake across different stages of life. Adult immunisation, in particular, remains a neglected area, exposing vulnerable populations to preventable diseases. Meanwhile, infant immunisation continues to be critical in reducing child mortality. As global health systems grapple with vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and inequities in access, the Infectious Disease Alliance (IDA) urges coordinated, evidence-driven action from policymakers, healthcare providers, researchers, and civil society to promote immunisation equity throughout the lifespan.

On April 3rd, 2025, experts convened at the IDA Virtual Webinar on Vaccination Across Lifespans to share cross-sectoral strategies aimed at strengthening vaccine delivery systems, enhancing public trust, and ensuring that people of all ages can access life-saving immunisations.

The challenge at hand

While significant progress in vaccination has been achieved, research shows that adult immunisation remains underutilised globally, despite its critical role in reducing morbidity, mortality, and healthcare costs from preventable diseases like influenza, pneumococcal infections, and HPV (Schaffner et al., 2010). Common barriers include low public awareness, limited healthcare provider recommendations, and fragmented policy frameworks—particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Strengthening adult immunisation requires integrated strategies, sustained funding, and public education efforts that highlight vaccines as essential beyond childhood.

Critically, recent developments have significantly impacted global immunisation efforts, particularly concerning adult vaccination programs. Notably, the Trump administration's decision to terminate a \$2.6 billion grant to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, has raised serious concerns among public health experts. This funding cut is projected to result in over a million deaths from preventable diseases, as millions of children may miss vaccinations. Additionally, the cessation of USAID's numerous health programs has halted initiatives aimed at combating malaria, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases, further jeopardising public health worldwide.

The consequences of inaction

Failure to address vaccine gaps in adults and infants will result in:

- Heightened disease burden, particularly among high-risk groups such as infants, older adults, and immunocompromised individuals.
- Increased strain on healthcare systems due to preventable disease outbreaks and associated resource demands.
- Diminished public confidence in vaccination efforts and health authorities, fueled by inconsistent access and communication.
- Widening health inequities, especially in underserved populations.

The international community cannot afford to ignore this crisis. The loss of funding is not just a temporary setback — it is a direct threat to global health stability and the well-being of millions. Immediate action is needed to restore and expand financial commitments toward VPD prevention.

Why this matters to Global Health security

Vaccination equity is a cornerstone of global health security. Ensuring immunisation access across lifespans not only prevents disease but also strengthens resilient health systems. Addressing vaccine hesitancy, improving policy integration, and promoting lifespan vaccination strategies are essential to uphold health equity and social justice. Aligning with the IDA 2025-2030 Policy Strategy, this webinar underscores the importance of multisectoral collaboration and civil society engagement in shaping sustainable immunisation frameworks.

IDA's Call to Action

We urge governments, public health authorities, civil society, and healthcare professionals to take immediate action:

- **Governments & Policymakers:**
 - Integrate lifespan immunisation strategies into national health plans.
 - Address vaccine hesitancy through evidence-based public communication campaigns.
 - Increase funding for adult immunisation infrastructure and equitable access.
- **Civil Society & Advocacy Groups:**
 - Amplify community voices on the importance of adult and infant vaccination.
 - Support education initiatives to counter misinformation.
 - Advocate for policies that prioritise vaccination equity across all ages.
- **Healthcare Providers:**
 - Actively promote adult and infant vaccination as part of routine care.
 - Address patient concerns about vaccine safety and efficacy.
 - Engage in lifespan immunisation training and outreach programs.
- **Researchers & Global Health Actors:**
 - Generate data on barriers to vaccination across demographics.
 - Evaluate the impact of policy interventions on immunisation uptake.
 - Share best practices to harmonise vaccination efforts.

Time is running out. Act now!

We cannot afford to lose the progress we've made. Every delay in expanding vaccination access and combating hesitancy increases vulnerability to preventable diseases, but every investment in vaccination programs yields immense health and economic benefits, reducing the disease burden and promoting healthier, longer lives. Join us in demanding urgent action. Sign this call to action and help us protect the world's most vulnerable populations from preventable diseases.

[Click here to sign the call to action on VPDs](#)

The IDA thanks all speakers, participants, and partners for their contributions to this insightful discussion. By working together, we can drive meaningful change in global health and combat vaccine-preventable diseases effectively.