HPV VACCINATION PROGRAM IN FINLAND, LESSONS LEARNT AND THE WAY FORWARD

Anneli Ignatius
School and Well baby clinic doctor
Tuusula, Finland
Overview of the HPV vaccination program (1)

• Before the decision for introduction could be made, National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) formed a work group to survey the disease burden caused by HPV, in spring 2008. WHY?
  – Diminish cervical cancer and other HPV disease
  – Most efficient screening methods for cervical cancer
  – Propose a plan for including HPV vaccination into National Immunization Program (NIP)
  – HPV vaccines: effectivity, safety and cost-effectiveness
Overview of the HPV vaccination program (2)

• Work group report in 2011
  – Recommendations regarding HPV vaccination program, organized screening (cervical cancer), Cervical smear outside screening
  – Expenses cased by HPV-diseases can be reduced to half (benefits from the vaccination program after >10 years)

• The HPV program was prepared with
  – Information provided
  – Schooling

• Start date of the program 11/2013
Overview of the HPV vaccination program (3)

• Target groups:
  – Girls of 11—12 years, 6th grade
    • During 5th grade health examination information given, permission from parents asked
    • During 7th—9th grade health examinations checked whether HPV vaccines have been given
      – Discussion, if not (Note! Voluntary)
      – Supplemented when necessary
      – Whole immunization series (the girl wants, parents resist)
  – Catch-up groups in 2013—2015: Girls in 7th—9th grade (12—16 years)
Overview of the HPV vaccination program (4)

- Implementation: School health care based
- Training and information sources for general public and vaccinators: based on research, special links
- Information about individual vaccination is collected from patient health records
  - Combined to registry office (e.g. mother tongue), disease registry (efficiency, safety)
  - Keeping statistics is crucial!
  - Vaccination coverage nationally and locally is provided by National Institute for Health and Welfare
Vaccination coverage in whole Finland by birth cohort (6/2016)

- 2003 66,0%
- 2002 71,9%
- 2001 66,9%
- 2000 67,8%
- 1999 65,8%
- 1998 65,3%
Vaccination coverage by birth cohort in Helsinki and in two cities with high and low coverage
HPV Vaccination coverage of birth cohort 2002 in Finland (6/2016)

FINLAND 71.9%

Raisio 82.5%
Tuusula 81.7%
Turku 78.3%
Pietarsaari 40.3%
Taivalkoski 31.8% (min)
Unknown for 6 municipalities
Major stakeholders or societal-historical factors with role and impact on the program

- Adolescents
- School nurses
  - Most central part, supported by THL
  - School doctors
- Parents
- National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)
- Medical industry, Centre for Medicine Information
- Previous vaccine crisis's: Pandemic A (H1N1) 2009 influenza (75% of children vaccinated; Narcolepsy)
SWOT “analysis” of the program (1)

• **SWOT = S**trengths, **W**eakness, **O**pportunities, **T**hreats

• **Strengths**
  – Well developed and universal health care with special emphasis on preventive medicine
  – School health care is comprehensive and reaches every child in the country
  – Specialized training for school nurses (vocational and well baby clinic nurses)
SWOT “analysis” of the program (2)

- **Weakness**
  - Fairly large, sparsely populated country

- **Opportunities**
  - Research based on comprehensive national health care records
    - From birth, for all Finns
    - E.g. cancer and vaccination registries
  - Women’s issues at the forefront in Finnish society
SWOT “analysis” of the program (3)

• Threats
  – The spread of false information in social media
  – The trend in society to isolate parents from the decision making regarding their children’s health care
  – Resistance to vaccinations in general in some segments of the population
  – Recent influx of immigrants of which we are not so familiar