Author's response to reviews

Title: Central European Vaccination Advisory Group (CEVAG) guidance statement on recommendations for influenza vaccination in children

Authors:

Vytautas Usonis (vytautas.usonis@mf.vu.lt)
Ioana Anca (ioanaalina@yahoo.com)
Francis André (feandre@yahoo.com)
Roman Chlibek (chlibek@pmfhk.cz)
Inga Ivaskeviciene (inga.ivaskeviciene@gmail.com)
Atanas Mangarov (amangarov@gmail.com)
Zsófia Mészner (zsmeszner@ogyei.hu)
Roman Prymula (prymula@seznam.cz)
Pavol Šimurka (simurka@ftnt.sk)
Eda Tamm (eda.tamm@kliinikum.ee)
Goran Tesovic (gtesovic@bfm.hr)

Version: 3 Date: 25 May 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Ms Rajabi,

Thank you for reviewing our paper. We have revised the manuscript as requested.

In summary, we incorporated the changes suggested and included another adjuvant vaccine in the future strategies section. Other adjuvants are under investigation however no data is currently published so we feel it is inappropriate to include these vaccines. Please note we prefer not to use proprietary names as this paper deals with the problem of paediatric influenza and has no intention of promoting particular products.

Below I have outlined how we have addressed the queries the reviewer.

**Reviewer #2**

1) The reviewer requested the text on p2, l 18 to read: ‘Special attention is needed for children up to 60 months of age’
   We have incorporated this change and likewise to page 12, line 21 and the summary point at the end of the manuscript (page 14)

2) The reviewer requested the text on p3, l 17 to read: ‘all children from the age of 6 months up to 18 years’
   We have incorporated this change

3) The reviewer requested the text on p4 l 5 to read: ‘attack rate of 30%’ and on l 7: ‘during the 2003–2004 influenza season’
   We have incorporated these changes

4) The reviewer requested the text on p5 l 2/3 to read: ‘Due to overlap of symptoms with other respiratory diseases infection, influenza in children is easily misdiagnosed [13].’
   We have incorporated this change

5) The reviewer suggested the text on p5 l 4/8 to read: ‘Typical symptoms of early influenza include mainly sudden high fever, cough and absence of rhinitis. Children do not always show these symptoms. Whilst high fever is a prominent sign of influenza, unlike adults, many of them treated for influenza in the outpatient setting present with rhinitis during the early phase of the illness, making clinical diagnosis confounding with a "cold" in this age group.’
   We have included the following text on page 5, line 5:
   ‘Typical symptoms of early influenza include mainly sudden high fever, cough and absence of rhinitis. Children do not always show these symptoms. Whilst high fever is a prominent sign of influenza, unlike adults, many children treated for influenza in the
outpatient setting present with rhinitis during the early phase of the illness, making clinical distinction from a ‘cold’ difficult in this age group.

6) The reviewer suggested including populations with chronic medical conditions and pregnant women on p6 l 7/8
We feel as the focus of the manuscript is on healthy children we would prefer not to include these populations.

7) The reviewer suggested the addition of the following to p6 l 11/13: ‘Despite those recommendations, young children often only receive one injection of influenza vaccine per season. A single dose of the vaccine is appropriate for primovaccination from 9 years of age.’
We have included the following text on page 8, line 16: ‘For older children receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine for the first time, a single dose of the vaccine is appropriate.’

8) The reviewer requested the information to be included: ‘under 3 years of age, a half dose is required per injection and that an annual booster dose is recommended everywhere.’
We have included the following text on page 8 line 15: ‘For children under 3 years of age a half dose is required per injection.’
We have included the following text on page 7 line 20: ‘An annual booster of influenza vaccine is recommended for all age groups.’

9) The reviewer suggested the text on p8 l 20/23 to read: ‘Amongst the evidence to consider before implementing any universal vaccination scheme, other than the disease burden, some issues need consideration: the safety of the vaccine to the recipient and to the whole population, the expectation of significant public health benefits with a demonstration of cost-effectiveness’
We have included the following text on page 9, line 6: ‘Before implementing any universal vaccination scheme it is vital to consider in addition to disease burden the safety of the vaccine to the recipient and to the whole population and the expectation of significant public health benefits with a demonstration of cost-effectiveness’

10) The reviewer suggested the text on p8 l 24 to read: ‘benefit on the community by vaccinating healthy children, mostly in school age’ and on l 25: ‘...found vaccination potentially beneficial to the children’
We have included the following text on page 9, line 11: ‘The indirect benefit to the community of vaccinating healthy children, mostly of school age, has been evaluated in a systematic review and found to be potentially beneficial to the children and capable of generating significant health benefits and cost saving for the wider community.’

11) The reviewer suggested the text on p10 l 27 to read: ‘Interestingly, 48% of children received the first dose of influenza vaccine’
We have incorporated this change.
12) The reviewer suggested to include on p13 l 11 that a higher rate of vaccination
in HCP is also required: a stronger motivation of HCP would enhance the
vaccination of children.
We have included the following text in what we believe to be a more suitable place on
page 14, line 7-9. ‘A stronger motivation on the part of health-care professionals would
also enhance the vaccination of children.’

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Vytautas Usonis

Vilnius University Clinic of Children’s Diseases,
Faculty of Medicine,
Vilnius University,
Vilnius,
Lithuania

E-mail address: vytautas.usonis@mf.vu.lt