Reviewer’s report

Title: THE VAXED PROJECT: An Assessment of Immunization Education in Canadian Health Professional Programs

Version: 1 Date: 22 March 2010

Reviewer: Paolo Bonanni

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Although the Authors state the limitations of the present study, too little attention is given to the main of such limitations, i.e. the extremely low response rate of medical schools (only two respondents!), which makes the result very unlikely to be representative of the real general situation. This aspect should be further stressed and consideration be given to the possibility that the real situation might be even worse than that described based on the two responding schools (by the way, real numbers and not only percentages of responding schools should be reported also in the text and not only in figures and tables). Was any attempt made to find other sources of information on curricula regarding vaccines in non-respondent medical schools?

2) The Authors declare that the 77-item questionnaire (VaxEd) was validated by the Canadian Center for Vaccinology. Was such validation concerning the content of the questions or also the suitability in length for the purpose of the study? I have serious doubts that a 77-item questionnaire is likely to be properly and cautiously filled in by a substantial proportion of subjects to which it is proposed. Can you comment on this?

2) No explanation is given about the fact that 86% of respondent to the VaxEd were females. It can be hypothesized that this is due to the higher representation of nursing students in the responding subjects, but no information is given in the paper on the distribution of those to whom the questionnaire was sent according to kind of curriculum (nursing, medical or pharmacy schools), nor the percentage of respondents among those different student categories is reported. This information is crucial in order to understand the reliability of the responses to the questionnaire.

4) Figure 3 (on mean knowledge scores) reports two different kind of nursing programs (Nursing 1 and Nursing 2). What are these two different programs? I have not been able to find the description of such 2 different programs in the text. Please explain.

Given these points that need revision and a reply before the manuscript can be considered acceptable for publication, the paper deals with an interesting and up-to-date subject on which a discussion needs to be raised.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'