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The Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS): Recent Immigrant Parents - 2023

Executive summary

Prepared for the Public Health Agency of Canada

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Ce sommaire est aussi disponible en français.

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This executive summary presents the methodological details for The Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS): Recent Immigrant Parents - 2023, conducted by Advanis Inc. on behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The survey was administered among 3,323 Canadian parents, 1,076 of them being recent immigrants (10 years or less in Canada), between August 7 and October 5, 2023.

Ce sommaire est aussi disponible en français sous le titre: Enquête sur la couverture vaccinale des enfants dans les populations clés (ECVEPC) - Parents immigrants récents - 2023.

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

Surveillance data suggests that vaccine coverage is uneven across Canada. Furthermore, results from existing surveillance tools suggest that certain key at-risk populations are under-surveyed.

New surveillance tools are needed to address data coverage gaps identified for at-risk populations and to inform public health vaccination programs and initiatives. In the effort of addressing vaccine coverage data gaps relating to at-risk populations, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) sought third party support to develop a new surveillance initiative, the Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS) in Canada.

The core objective of this survey is to provide up-to-date childhood vaccine coverage data (e.g., on measles, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, COVID-19) specific to the recent immigrant population. The survey will assess parent/legal guardian/other person most knowledgeable's (PMK; e.g., child's step-parent, adoptive parent, foster parent, sister or brother, grandparent or relative caring for and responsible for health decisions for the child) opinions and views on their child's immunization uptake, as well as vaccine hesitancy and vaccine refusal. This survey will also investigate the reasons for vaccine hesitancy among these populations and the impact this has on routine childhood immunization, for each population.

The second objective is to consider the unknown effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on concurrent childhood immunizations to determine priorities for vaccine-preventable diseases, with the aim of identifying whether catch-up routine immunization campaigns are required.

The surveillance project aims to collect information on:

- Routine childhood and COVID-19 immunizations status
- Intent to get vaccinated for those not yet vaccinated
- Reasons for non-vaccination (including barriers)
- Parent/guardian/other PMK's knowledge, attitudes and beliefs (KAB) toward immunization
- Trusted sources of information on immunization, including routine childhood vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines
- Inequalities in vaccination uptake by socio-demographic characteristics

1.2 Research Use

The COVID-19 pandemic has yielded a large shift in Canadians' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs towards vaccinations, including for these specific populations. For certain populations, recent evidence points that there has been a high prevalence of vaccine hesitancy and refusal for COVID-19 vaccines. Monitoring of parental attitudes is essential to predict expected vaccine uptake and to guide education and awareness efforts to promote vaccination among children issued from these specific populations.

New surveillance tools are needed to fill data coverage gaps identified for at-risk populations and to support the development of public health vaccination programs and initiatives tailored to these populations. With this in mind, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) sought third party support to implement a new surveillance initiative titled: The Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS) in Canada.

1.3 Methodology

Data collection was completed between August 7 to October 5, 2023. Respondents were offered an online survey through the use of Advanis' General Population Representative Sample (GPRS) and through Random digit dialing (RDD). Advanis sought a probability-based sample of 3,000 Canadian parents/guardians of children and adolescents younger than 18 years old living across Canada.

The target audience for this project were recent immigrants to Canada (10 years or less) who are parents/legal guardian/other persons most knowledgeable (PMK; e.g., child's step-parent, adoptive parent, foster parent, sister or brother, grandparent or relative caring for and responsible for health decisions for the child) for a child(ren) aged 17 years or younger living across the country. The targeted number of completed surveys was 3,000 Canadian parents (including 1,000 from the targeted populations and 2,000 from the general population). Questions within the survey further filtered out responses from anyone under the age of 18 years (S1) and responses for anyone who is not the parent/legal guardian of a child(ren) under the age of 18 (S2). A total of 3,323 responses were obtained (1,076 from the targeted populations, 2,196 from the general population and 51 for which the immigration status information was unavailable) to reach quotas, where possible (Table 1).

Advanis also worked to obtain nationally representative coverage of the following key sub-populations:

- Parents with children in the age groups: 0 months to 4 years, 5-11 years, 12-17 years.
- Parents in specific regions (individual provinces and territories).
- Children of both sexes (50% males, 50% females).

The data was weighted by regional distribution, the child's sex at birth, the child's age, parental education levels (differentiated for parent one, parent two, and single-parent families), parental immigration status (differentiated for parent one, parent two, and single-parent families), and gender identity (gender⁺¹) of the parent (differentiated for parent one, parent two, and single-parent families), using a dataset provided by Statistics Canada for population counts.

1.4 Key Findings

Most children have been vaccinated at least once in their lifetime (93% for both recent immigrant parents and non-recent immigrant parents). A majority of those who received at least one vaccine also received all the recommended childhood vaccines for their child's age (66% for those with recent immigrant parents and 70% for those with non-recent immigrant parents).

Although most did not encounter obstacles when trying to get vaccinated, difficulty booking time off work or school for a vaccine appointment and a child's fear of needles were the main obstacles mentioned by both recent immigrant and non-recent immigrant parents.

For recent immigrant parents, the main reason not to have their child immunized with one or more recommended childhood vaccines was because the vaccine was not available or recommended in their origin country (18%) and because they did not know that one or more of these vaccines were important

¹ The non-binary, two-spirit/bi-spirit, and other gender population is small, and data aggregation to a two-category gender variable (denoted by the "+" symbol) is often used to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. Non-binary persons, and two-spirit/bi-spirit persons, and persons of other genders are randomly classified as men+ and as women+ in Statistics Canada's data. This results in two gender categories: "men+" and "women+."

for their child to get (17%). For non-recent immigrant parents, the main reasons included not considering it necessary for their child (39%) and concerns about the safety of the vaccine(s) and/ or their side effects (18%).

The main reason for deciding not to get their child vaccinated or for being hesitant towards vaccination was concerns about the safety of the vaccine(s) or their side effects for both recent immigrant and non-recent immigrant parents (64% and 55%, respectively), followed by concerns about the effectiveness of the vaccine(s) (26% for recent immigrant parents and 35% for non-recent immigrant parents) and mistrust in vaccine-related information (15% for recent immigrant parents and 35% for non-recent immigrant parents) .

Regarding the COVID-19 vaccine specifically, among recent immigrant parents, 57% said that their child has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 68% among non-recent immigrant parents.

Non-recent immigrant parents tend to believe in higher proportions than recent immigrant parents that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe (60% vs. 54%).

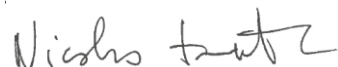
1.5 Contract value

The contract value for this study was \$145,891.14 (including HST).

1.6 Political Neutrality Requirement

I hereby certify as a Senior Officer of Advanis that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada's political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research.

Specifically, the deliverables do not contain any reference to electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leader.



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