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The Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS): 2SLGBTQI+ and Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) Parents 2023

Executive Summary

Prepared for the Public Health Agency of Canada

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This executive summary presents the methodological details for The Childhood Immunization Coverage Survey in Key Populations (KPCICS): 2SLGBTQ+ and Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) Parents 2023, conducted by Advanis Inc. on behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The survey was administered among 5,576 members of the adult Canadian general public, 584 of them where 2SLGBTQ+ or MSM, between August 3 and October 2, 2023.

Ce sommaire est aussi disponible en français sous le titre: Enquête sur la couverture vaccinale des enfants dans les populations clés (ECVEPC) - Parents 2SLGBTQ+ et hommes ayant des relations sexuelles avec des hommes 2023

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Executive Summary

Background and Objectives

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 2SLGBTQI+ and MSM populations. 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/legal 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.

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.

Methodology

Data collection was completed between August 3 to October 2, 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 5,500 Canadian parents/guardians of children and adolescents younger than 18 years old living across Canada.

The target audience for this project were 2SLGBTQI+ and MSM populations in Canada who are parents/legal guardians/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 Canada. The targeted number of completed surveys was 5,500 Canadian parents/legal guardians/PMK (including 500 from the targeted populations and 5,000 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 5,576 responses were obtained (588 from 2SLGBTQI+ (including 4 MSM not 2SLGBTQI+), 164 MSM and 4,988 from the general population) to reach quotas, where possible (Table 1). As part of the expected 5,000 a notable proportion ended up being part of the 2SLGBTQI+ community. Since this was the main target of this study, the results actually provided more of the target population and slightly less of the general public.

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 to 11 years, 12 to 17 years.
- Parents in specific regions (individual provinces and territories).
- Children of both sexes (50% males, 50% females).

The 2SLGBTQI+ were defined as anyone who identified as not heterosexual and cis-gendered. The MSM were any men that indicated having sexual intercourse with another man, regardless of whether or not they considered themselves part of the 2SLGBTQI+ community. For more information about the target populations, please refer to section 4.

Data are unweighted since the population proportions were not available for this exact population of parents.

Key Findings

Most children with 2SLGBTQI+ or MSM parents have been vaccinated at least once (96% for those with 2SLGBTQI+ parents and 95% for those with MSM parents). A majority of those who received at least one vaccine also received all the recommended vaccines (71% for those with 2SLGBTQI+ parents and 71% for those with MSM parents).

Although most did not encounter obstacles when trying to get vaccinated, a child's fear of needles and the difficulty to book time off work or school for a vaccine appointment were the main obstacles mentioned by both 2SLGBTQI+ and MSM parents.

The main reasons for deciding not to get their child vaccinated or for being hesitant towards recommended childhood vaccination were concerns about the safety of the vaccine(s) or their side effects (61% for hesitant 2SLGBTQI+ parents and 62% for hesitant MSM parents).

Regarding the COVID-19 vaccine specifically, among 2SLGBTQI+ parents, almost three quarters (74%) said that their child has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. It is also the case for 77% of MSM parents. The main reasons for hesitancy regarding the COVID-19 vaccine were concerns that not enough research has been done on the vaccine in children and concerns about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines and/or side effects.

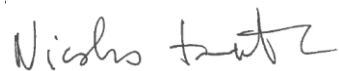
Contract value

The contract value for this study was \$195,196.20 (including HST).

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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