

## Low Influenza Vaccine Coverage Rates among Polish Nurses

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**Abstract :** Introduction: Influenza is an important clinical and epidemiological problem and should be considered as a possible nosocomial infection. The aim of the study was to determine the influenza vaccine coverage rates among Polish nurses and to find out drivers and barriers for influenza vaccination among this group of health care workers (HCWs). Material and methods: The self-fulfilled survey with 26 questions about the knowledge, perception, and influenza coverage rates was distributed among 461 nurses. Results: Only 15% of nurses were vaccinated against influenza in the consecutive seasons. The majority (75%) of the regularly vaccinated nurses were ambulatory careworkers. The difference between the number of vaccinated hospitals and ambulatory care nurses was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The main motivating factors for an influenza vaccination were: a fear of the illness and its complications (97%) and a free of charge vaccine available at the workplace (87%). Ambulatory care nurses more often declared that they were vaccinated mainly to protect themselves while hospital care nurses more often declared the will to protect their patients, these differences in the perception and attitudes to an influenza vaccination among hospital and ambulatory care nurses were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The main barriers for an influenza vaccination among the nursing staff were: a lack of reimbursement of the vaccine (95%), a lack of insufficient knowledge about the effectiveness, and safety of the influenza vaccine (54%). The ambulatory care nurses more often found influenza vaccination as the ethical duty compared to hospital care nurses ( $p < 0.05$ ). Conclusions: The influenza vaccine coverage rates among the Polish nurses are low and must be improved in the future. More educational activities dedicated to HCWs may result in the increased awareness of influenza vaccination benefits for both medical professionals and patients.

**Keywords :** influenza, vaccination, nurses, ambulatory careworkers

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