



Paediatric
Association of
Nigeria (PAN)

PAEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA POSITION STATEMENT ON HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS VACCINE

1ST JUNE 2024

The Paediatric Association of Nigeria (PAN) is dismayed by the vaccine hesitancy that has attended the roll out of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination in the Phase 2 states. PAN wishes to state that vaccines are generally safe and effective. They have been instrumental in controlling disease and in the eradication of the dreaded smallpox disease and near eradication of Poliomyelitis. Vaccines save over 4 million lives globally on an annual basis.

The HPV vaccine has been demonstrated to be **very safe and highly effective** in preventing infection with the Human Papilloma virus the causative organism of cervical cancer, a disease which is responsible for the deaths of 8,000 Nigerian women annually.

The known side effects of the HPV vaccine are few and mild and include fever, pain at the injection site, nausea and fainting (for which the vaccine is administered with the recipient sitting down and then observed for 15-30minutes afterwards). Serious side effects are rare. This has been the experience of the country having administered over 5 million doses in the phase 1 states and over 3 million doses in the current exercise.

Long term studies on side effects in countries like Australia that have used the vaccine for much longer have not demonstrated any effect on fertility.

PAN therefore encourages our members to continue to recommend the vaccine while calling on members of the public to ensure that their daughters/wards aged 9-14 years are vaccinated with the HPV vaccine. We also encourage older women to take advantage of the cervical screening that is ongoing in health centres to get screened for the disease.

Finally we note with dismay the contrary views being disseminated by one paediatrician and wish to state categorically that these views do not represent the position of PAN therefore paediatricians as well as the general public should disregard them.

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