Breaking Down The Barriers to Covid-19 Vaccination in The Obstetric Population

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Background

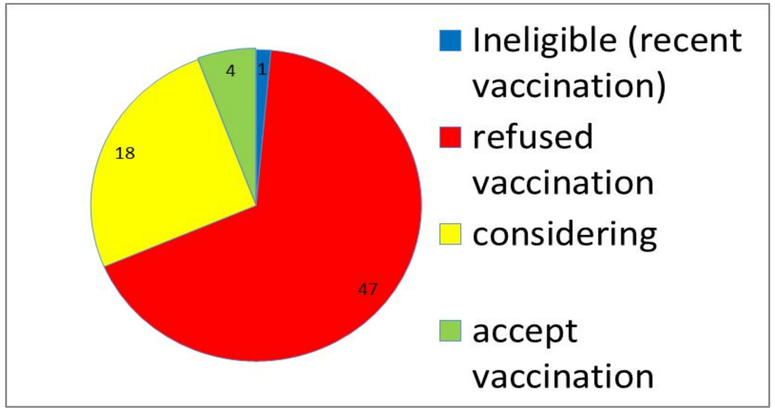
- Since the emergence of COVID-19 in December 2019, a vaccine was sought with world wide collaboration between scientists.
- In December 2020, the first vaccine against COVID-19 was administered in the UK.
- A joint campaign between the Royal College of Midwifery and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, to encouraging pregnant patients to get vaccinated started in January 2022.
- Emerging data showed poor vaccination uptake in pregnant patients, along with limited adverse events from the vaccine and poor outcomes in unvaccinated pregnant patients with an ITU admission due to COVID-19.
- Data from the UK Obstetric Surveillance System showed that 96.3% (1436) of pregnant patients admitted to hospital with COVID-19 were unvaccinated (between May and October 2021).
- 19% of hospitalised women with COVID-19 had preterm delivery.
- In August 2021, only 22% of women who gave birth were vaccinated.

Methods

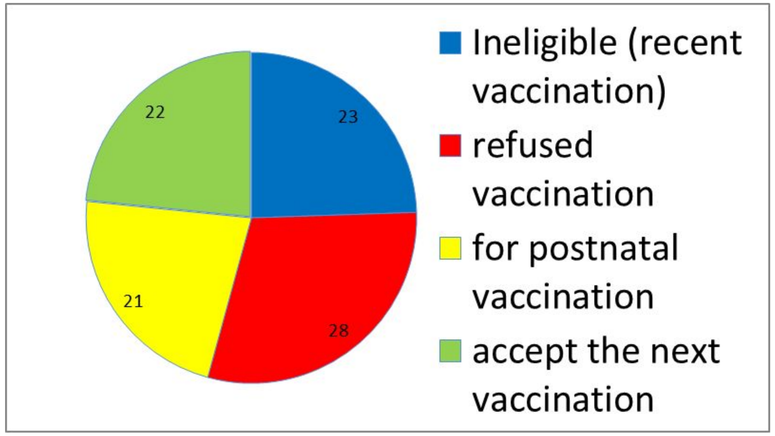
- Across three hospitals within the trust (Solihull, Good Hope and Heartlands) pregnant patients seen in antenatal clinic were invited to answer a questionnaire about their vaccination status, and views on the COVID-19 vaccination.
- This included questions on concerns surrounding the vaccine including needle phobia, concerns over risks to the foetus, concerns over vaccine safety, and no belief in the COVID-19 virus.
- Data was collected on current vaccination state and common concerns over the vaccine. This was carried out by doctors, who were able to answer any concerns or questions raised.
- Patients, and their birth partners, were offered the COVID-19 vaccine at the appointment.
- A team of staff were available to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination within the clinic.

Results

- 165 questionnaires were completed during January 2022
- 71 patients had not received any COVID-19 vaccination at the time of the questionnaire (43%)
- Of the 71 unvaccinated patients:



- Of the 94 patients who had received at least one dose of the vaccination:



Discussion

- Face to face discussion at already planned appointments contributed to improving knowledge about vaccine safety in pregnancy. It allowed for any myths or concerns to be discussed and an informed choice.
- 26 patients, or their birth partners, received the COVID-19 vaccination at the antenatal clinic.
- Of 165 patients who answered the questionnaire, 98 had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 22 were eligible and accepted the next COVID-19 vaccination.
- Having access to a team able to administer the COVID-19 vaccination allowed for accessibility and removed further barriers.

Recommendations

- To continue education around receiving the COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy, webinars will be created to allow interaction with patients.
- Staff education is to continue, to facilitate correct information sharing and discussion with patients and their families.

The audit was registered with the hospital audit department and approved. Consent was taken from participants for data collection and its subsequent use.

References

- Severe COVID-19 in pregnancy is almost exclusively limited to unvaccinated women – time for policies to change.

  Hilde Engjom, Thomas van den Akker et al , The Lancet, Vol 13, 100313, Feb 1 2022Ayras, Kitty Bloemenkamp, Serena Donati, et al.

- Impact of SARS-CoV-2 variant on the severity of maternal infection and perinatal outcomes: Data from the UK Obstetric Surveillance System national cohort.

  Nicola Vousden PhD , Rema Ramakrishnan PhD et al, UKOSS OSS