Pediatricians' Vaccine Attitudes and Practices Before and After a Major Measles Outbreak

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The objective of this study was to describe how a sample of pediatricians were impacted by and responded to the Disneyland measles outbreak in the United States. We conducted three repeated cross-sectional, online surveys in 2014 (before the outbreak), 2015, and 2016 (after the outbreak) among members of three state chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics. We assessed pediatricians' level of willingness and length of time comfortable delaying the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine before and after the outbreak. Frequency of alternative immunization schedule requests and creation of office immunization policies due to the outbreak were measured. The sample included 304 pediatricians in 2014, 270 in 2015, and 221 in 2016. We found no significant changes in willingness or comfort delaying the MMR vaccine before and after the outbreak. In 2015, 38% of pediatricians reported fewer requests for alternative immunization schedules and 20% created stricter office immunization policies. A subsample of pediatricians reported administering the MMR vaccine earlier in the recommended time frame and taking extra precautions in waiting rooms due to the outbreak. Our results suggest that this measles outbreak did not lead to significant changes in attitudes or practices among this sample, but did modestly affect office immunization policies and practices.

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