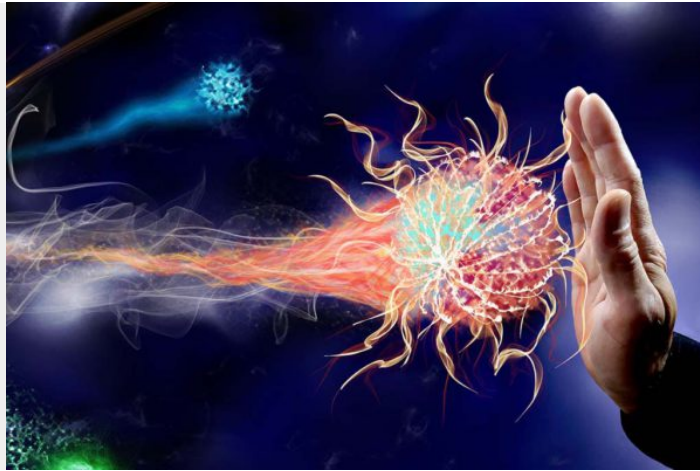


MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR IMMUNIZATION DUE TO COVID-19

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Category: [Opinion](#)

The whole world is perturbed about the recent pandemic, which is another example of a man-made disaster in the recent times, and time has really come to ponder the major implications it has left on the lives of the innocent people. Routine immunization suffers immensely in the face of pandemics and disasters putting the lives of children at stake.

In recent years, the cases of Missed Opportunities for Vaccination (MOV) have been increasing. A missed opportunity for vaccination (MOV) refers to any contact with health services by an individual (child or person of any age) who is eligible for vaccination (e.g. unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and free of contraindications to vaccination), which does not result in the person receiving one or more of the vaccine doses for which he or she is eligible.

Now the main question that lurks behind is the issue of vaccination coverage and the timeliness of vaccination. Now both of these have been a real problem encountered during this Covid-19 pandemic as not only the care givers, but the health workers feared in reaching out to the mass for the fear of contracting this deadly disease. The fear was augmented by the increase in the number of deaths and no vaccines in the industry to offer protection. WHO and UNICEF struck the alarm bell of reduction in the immunization service delivery during covid-19. This was the first time in 28 years that the world evidenced a sharp decline in the DPT coverage which is a marker for assessing the

routine immunization coverage within and across countries. So also the same declining trend was noticed in other vaccines too.



The Missed Opportunities for Vaccination (MOV) answers the Questions of How many, Why and What. By how many it means to address the number of missed opportunities. By Why they try to investigate into the probable caused for such missed opportunities and by what it tries to find a solution to this impending problem. To answer these questions, there is a Ten (10) Step Process to this strategy, namely:

1. Plan for a MOV assessment
2. Prepare for field visits
3. Collect data from the fields
4. Analysis and Identification of key themes
5. Brainstorm and formulate an Action Plan
6. Debrief to Ministries of Health and partner Organizations
7. Implement Interventions
8. Supportive Supervision & Monitoring
9. Perform a Rapid Evaluation
10. Incorporate In Future Improvement plans.



Had the Disaster not struck us, we would not have such MOVs as the pandemic jeopardized the whole system from its root. Efforts are now made to increase the coverage of immunization as well as strengthening the Routine Immunization so that they remain as it is before. So it is essential that in order to strengthen the routine service, we need to reduce such events of MOVs and it is a lesson in itself that how the routine immunization may be restored in the event of any disaster, by keeping these MOVs at a minimum at other times.

About the Author:



Dr. Tanushree Mondal

Dr. Tanushree Mondal is Assistant Director of Medical Education, Government of West Bengal.

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