

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Community based COVID vaccination center ready for the switch towards a broad community-based prevention center: In Jan'21 the Flemish Region started the COVID vaccination in public health mode, based on the cooperation of local municipalities concentrated in 60 primary health care units.

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Framework: Each local “unit of care” has an average population of 100.000 people and is managed by local caregivers. Within two months (Jan-Feb'21), 80 vaccination centers were set up and launched. A central strategic center and logistic/financial support were created. A local team of municipal representatives and caregivers was composed. It resulted in a management team which launched the operational vaccination sessions.

All citizens were invited by email, letter or SMS. An individual appointment was booked in the vaccination center matching the zip code of the citizen's residence. Specific software enabled vaccination agenda management and its registration in Flanders' central vaccination database.

The initial goal was to cover at least 70% of the target population, but in the primary care unit “Voorkempen”, a coverage of 95,45% was reached.

Vaccination center “Voorkempen” ‘s results: The health unit “Voorkempen” is a defined area, situated in the province of Antwerp and is composed of 6 municipalities which give home to 111.102 inhabitants.

The campaign consisted of four periods :

- Feb-Sep'21 : basic vaccination (97.763 citizens)
- Oct'21-Feb'22 : 1st booster campaign for all 12+ (93.316 citizens).
- May-June'22: extra booster exclusively for 80+ (7.153 citizens)
- Sept-Oct'22 : 2nd booster for all 18+, (90.473 citizens)

Lessons learned:

1.Flexible management by a limited number of managers (4) with daily meetings and quick decision making is essential and covers :

A.The infrastructure in time and space.

B.The IT environment including call center, vaccination agenda and HR management.

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C.Vaccination sessions planning : stock control and ordering, session planning and unfolding of a mobile team.

D.HR management : staff recruitment & selection, training, coaching, contracting, team composition, insurance, payroll.

E.Operational vaccination sessions: reception and flow inside the vaccination center, problem solving, administrative check-in, vaccination, registration, surveillance.

F.Vaccination registration : group registration in Vaccinnet as a base for COVID certification

2.The support of the municipalities was crucial : accountancy, logistic support, mass communication.

3.The primary healthcare providers' trust and cooperation was established by constant communication, information and feedback.

4.The mobilization of local volunteers was overwhelming - it became a flexible group coping with unforeseen circumstances and unexpected events.

5.Population management: the data collection concerns local infection rates, hospitalizations and vaccination rates. Its analysis allowed quick reactions.

Future: The broad experiences of the central management, people management and population management in this vaccination center can be used to improve preventive actions and early detection programs in different domains:

- Infectious diseases including influenza: testing and vaccinations in a similar center as the COVID vaccination center, - new vaccines will be on the market soon.

- Chronic diseases: early risk detection and risk management: lifestyle, healthy diet, exercising,...

- Improvement of oncological screening programs (breast cancer, cervix cancer and colorectal cancer).

- Geriatric stratification and early support

- Mental health

For the permanent switch to a local "prevention center", political decisions, a legal framework and structural support is absolutely necessary.