

What about concomitance of seasonal influenza and Covid-19 vaccination campaigns?

The French case

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Background

- October 2021: launch of the seasonal influenza vaccination campaign in France.
- Context of the seasonal influenza vaccination campaign:
 - ✓ Concomitance with the Covid-19 booster campaign.
 - ✓ Changes proposed by Health Authorities, e.g. extension of the vaccinators' list, first weeks dedicated only to the targeted at risk population, possible co-administration of the two vaccines.
 - ✓ New high dose influenza vaccine reimbursed for 65 years of age and over.

The COVIGIE group decided to survey its primary health care workers (PHCW) network about their experience and perception of the vaccination campaigns' concomitance. The COVIGIE project is based on a specific platform allowing PHCW to participate in specific surveys.

Methods

Based on the COVIGIE network, we performed an internet survey about the 2021-2022 influenza vaccination campaign, in the specific context of Covid-19 circulation and booster vaccination period.

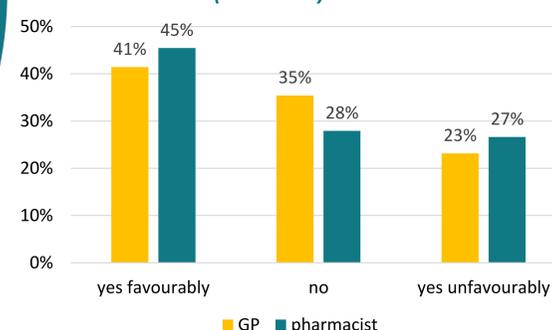
The survey (23 questions) was proposed online to PHCW, mainly GPs and pharmacists, between January and March 2022, with several reminder emails. Participation was anonymous.

Analyses were conducted with Stata 11.2.

COVIGIE
 A consortium of non-governmental primary care organizations, created during the first wave of Covid-19. A specific platform allowing healthcare professionals to share their experience and signals that reflect the reality of the field and can help in decision-making.
www.covigie.org

Covid-19 crisis seems to **have changed the behavior for only some of the patients towards flu vaccination.**

Graph 2. In general, since the Covid-19 pandemic, have your patients' behaviors changed with respect to flu vaccination? (n=675)



Results

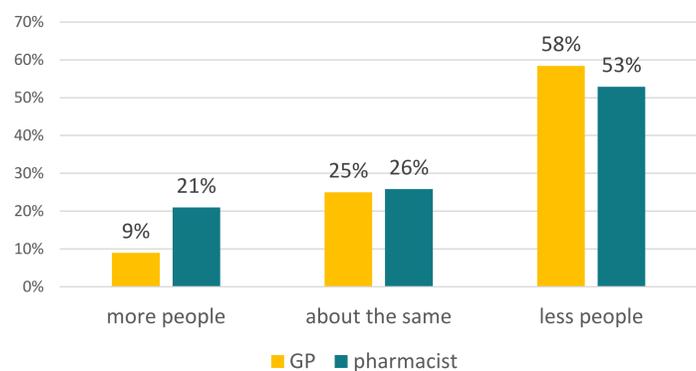
1 101 non-hospital vaccinators have clicked on the survey link, **795 completed all the questions.**

Participants were:

- 49% of GPs and 41% of pharmacists
- 61% of women
- 53% aged between 40 and 60
- themselves vaccinated against influenza (87%) and Covid-19 (97%).

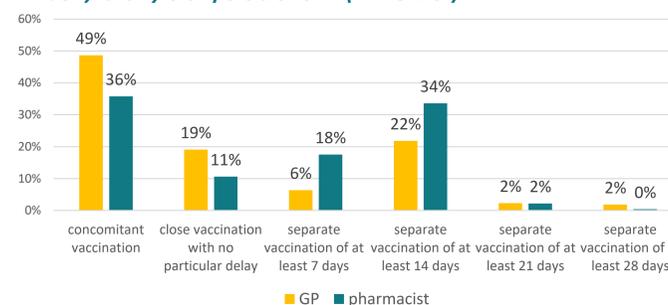
More than half of participants (**55%**) felt having vaccinated **less patients against influenza** than previous campaign.

Graph 1. Compared to last year, do you feel this year that you have vaccinated against flu (n=666):



The possibility of co-administration has been little implemented: only 41% of the PHCW favoured it.

Graph 3. If you are vaccinating against influenza and Covid-19 this winter, do you focus on (n=529):



The new high dose influenza vaccine was used by only 27% of the PHCW. Main reasons for not using it were :

- For GPs: patients didn't come with it (67%) / ignorance of this vaccine (36%);
- For pharmacists: didn't order it (72%) / no prescription, nor recommendation by GPs (67%).

However, when vaccinators proposed this vaccine to their patients, 88% of them agreed to be vaccinated with it.

Conclusion

PHCW seem to have accepted and implemented most of the new measures of influenza vaccination campaign 2021-2022.

Two topics may need PHCW targeted communication to be better implemented for the next influenza vaccination campaign:

- possible co-administration of influenza and Covid-19 vaccines;
- possible use of high dose influenza vaccine for people 65 years old and over.

