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Vaccine coverage in elderly is related to lower mortality for respiratory diseases

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Respiratory infections are related to elderly mortality. Influenza virus is one of the main etiological agents for respiratory diseases. Rio Grande do Sul is the Southernmost State of Brazil having the highest mortality for respiratory infection. Vaccination of these individuals is considered by the World Health Organization to be the most effective strategy to reduce morbidity and mortality from the disease. Brazilian Ministry of Health has pursued to vaccinate 80% of the elderly population, aiming to reduce respiratory mortality in this age group, but the vaccine coverage has not been uniform in the country. The present study targets to relate vaccination coverage for influenza and the mortality rate from respiratory diseases in the elderly. This was a cross-sectional study with secondary data analysis. Data on vaccination coverage in 2010 of the elderly of the 496 cities in Rio Grande do Sul were obtained from the website of the Brazilian National Immunization Program and mortality from the Mortality Information System, both controlled by the Brazilian Ministry of Health. The results showed that 49% of municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul reached the target of 80% of seniors vaccinated. In municipalities with below target vaccination coverage, the number of deaths was 5.2 per 1, 000 elderly. This average is significantly higher than in municipalities with coverage equal to or above 80%. The conclusion is that the target proposed by the Brazilian Ministry of Health to vaccinate 80% or more of the elderly is effective in reducing mortality from respiratory diseases.

Biography

Angelo Jose Goncalves Bos graduated in Medicine (1983) and did specialization in Geriatrics (1988). He has PhD degree in Medicine from Tokai University (Japan), with emphasis in Community Health, and Post-doctoral training at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health (USA). Currently, he is Assistant Professor of PUCRS and teaches three courses at Master's and Doctoral Programs of Biomedical Gerontology: Quantitative Methods of Biomedical Research, Epidemiology and Demography of Ageing and Public Health and Ageing. He is the Head of the Public Health and Ageing Research Program (PUCRS) and the President of the Brazilian Society of Geriatrics and Gerontology State Section RS.

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