

Italian charter for vaccines promotion

A CALL FOR ACTION

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Introduction

Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent the most serious infectious diseases. It's very important to promote vaccine plans for their incontestable impact on the whole world and for the health opportunities they give.

Why a charter for vaccines promotion?

The Italian charter for vaccines promotion ("the Charter") is a call for action and an instrument of advocacy which offers the opportunity to support and spread the importance of vaccine plans. Everyone interested in that purpose, organizations or single individuals, can use the Charter to sensitize and unify local and national government.

Do you know what Advocacy for health is?

Advocacy for health is a combination of individual and social actions which have the purpose of obtaining political engagement, social consensus and social system support for a specific goal or health program. This kind of actions should be undertaken by/ on behalf of a group or a single person, to create healthy life conditions and obtain healthy lifestyles. Advocacy is one of the three main strategies which promote public health and can have multiple forms, among which there are the use of mass medias and multimedia tools, any initiative who can put a direct pressure on political parties, and people mobilization (for example forming coalitions about specific problems). Health professionals have a bigger responsibility, because they have to support and defend health at any level of the society

Report of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Advocacy Strategies for Health and Development: Development Communication in Action. WHO, Geneva, 1995

The fundamental principles



1) Right to prevention

Vaccines are a precious opportunity of prevention. With vaccines, every year in Italy thousands of lives get protected from preventable diseases, and to be protected from such diseases is a right that every human being has.



2) Social responsibility

Besides being of an irrefutable individual value, vaccines are the most effective way of protecting public health, through herd immunity. For this reason, health authorities, press services and any citizen interested in that purpose, have the duty to promote the importance of vaccines, in a process which involves all the parts.



3) Information

The decision of vaccinating has to be conscious and informed. The information about vaccines has to be clear, accessible, accurate, complete, fully understandable and has to mention the best scientific evidences. It has to be acquired and spread with responsibility.



4) Contrast to disinformation

The more and more growing diffusion of incorrect information about vaccines has caused serious damages both to individuals and to communities. This kind of disinformation has to be contrasted.



5) Communication

Considering how communication has changed in the last years, it is necessary to propose new models, which reinforce the reputation and credibility of the institutions; they have to be well planned, prompt, coherent, coordinated, proactive, dialogue based, and they have to include the new social medias.



6) Quality

Like every medical activity, vaccines have to fulfil quality requirements. Healthcare services (i.e Vaccine clinics) must rely on adequate financial resources, with a constantly up-to-date staff.

From principles to action

Principle 1

Right to prevention

Vaccines are a precious opportunity of prevention. With vaccines, every year in Italy thousands of lives get protected from preventable diseases, and to be protected from such diseases is a right that every human being has .

- 1.1 Guarantee/promote the free access to the vaccines included into the National Plan.
- 1.2 Eliminate every possible barrier who may limit the access to vaccines, for example towards people or groups of people in disadvantage.
- 1.3 Grant people the access to their own certificate of immunization (IC) and encourage the presence of a health professional to whom people can address, or the realization of an easy procedure to obtain their own certificate.
- 1.4 Encourage the possibility for people to exercise their right to prevention at any moment of their life, especially if they are suffering from specific or chronic conditions which could worsen without getting vaccinated. If someone decides not to vaccinate themselves or their children, they should be granted the possibility to change their mind and get vaccinated.

Principle 2

Social responsibility

Besides being of an irrefutable individual value, vaccines are the most effective way of protecting public health, through herd immunity. For this reason, health authorities, press services and any citizen interested in that purpose, have the duty to promote the importance of vaccines, in a process which involves all the parts.

- 2.1 Engage in divulging the Charter throughout the Country, encouraging people's adhesion to it in every public or private institution.
- 2.2 Cooperate with health professionals, schools, universities, politics, mass medias, to encourage the spread of the Charter's principles and increase all the possible actions.
- 2.3 Engage in assuring, in the context of the institutions who adhered to the Charter, the respect of its own principles.
- 2.4 Encourage people's joining in spreading the correct information about vaccines.
- 2.5 Encourage society to understand the importance of vaccines by promoting scientific culture.
- 2.6 Invest money to improve healthcare services (i.e vaccine clinics), promote the principles and actions of this Charter, and support all the realities which adhered to it.
- 2.7 Adhere to the vaccine plans, in order to guarantee the protection of those people who cannot be vaccinated because of their health condition.

Principle 3

Information

The decision of vaccinating has to be conscious and informed. The information about vaccines has to be clear, accessible, accurate, complete, fully understandable and has to mention the best scientific evidences. It has to be acquired and spread with responsibility.

Art. 24 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

- a) To diminish infant and child mortality;
- (b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;
- c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;
- d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;
- (e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;
- f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

3.1 Every health professional involved with vaccines should guarantee a coherent and correct information, in order to avoid the spread of misleading and unclear one, about both technical aspects and parent's FAQ (frequently asked questions).

3.2 Encourage a service which offers the patient the sensation of a constant follow up, activate information services (i.e phone calls, or emails) which assure an answer to any question or doubt both before and after getting vaccinated.

3.3 Guarantee any sort of pre-vaccination talk in order to clarify any doubt or fear and, in case of a non vaccination, resume them periodically.

3.4 Adopt specific policies to promote the transparency of the health professionals who work in vaccine clinics.

3.5 Engage in Health Literacy, in the divulgation of the scientific method in schools and in teaching children how to get information on the internet.

3.6 Engage in promoting vaccine culture, for example organizing periodic meetings with the parents, specific conventions, speaking about vaccines in pre partum classes, in workplaces, and in public places.

3.7 Sensitize/inform adults about vaccines and boosters -to get in their life, for example speaking with their doctor and activating a constant flux of information which lasts for the whole life.

3.8 Get full access to information (both online and in clinics) about some clue subjects such as:

- how a single vaccine works and how vaccine technique has improved;
 - vaccines production and distribution;
 - vaccine composition
-
- the kind of vaccines available on the market
 - the statistics about the risk-benefit ratio
 - the updated statistics about the main infectious diseases
 - how pharmacovigilance works
 - Understanding the difference between adverse events and side effects of vaccines

3.9 Publicize all the information about infectious diseases preventable with vaccines and all the data regarding vaccines, if possible through a stratified information (by village, neighborhood, school, pediatricians.)

3.10 Promote, in every health office or vaccine clinic, the presence and spread of specific literature (such as pamphlets) for children and teenagers.

3.11 Encourage the organization of workshops/lectures about vaccines for the future health professionals.

3.12 Promote Multilanguage services when accessing to vaccine clinics, particularly on literature and pamphlets.

Principle 4

Contrast to disinformation

The more and more growing diffusion of incorrect information about vaccines has caused serious damages both to individuals and to communities. This kind of disinformation has to be contrasted.

4.1 Discourage any public administration's direct or indirect support to antivax groups (for example not sponsoring the organization of public meetings).

4.2 Engage in not creating or spreading false information or pseudo scientific theories about vaccines.

4.3 Encourage the recognition of the possible violations of vaccine support by the doctors and health professionals who work with NHS.

4.4 Adopt/encourage the adoption of disciplinary sanctions whenever required.

4.5 Engage in supporting and spreading the correct scientific information, fighting against the mistake of the so called false balance (see the box on the right).

4.6 Engage in any activity which contrasts false myths about vaccines (Debunking – see the box on the right).

False balance is a real or perceived media bias, where journalists present an issue as being more balanced between opposing viewpoints than the evidence actually supports. In this way people are allowed to think that there is a controversy, for example in the scientific community, which does not exist in reality.
For further infos: Rete Informazione Vaccini 2015

A debunker is a person who attempts to expose or discredit claims believed to be false, exaggerated, or pretentious. The term, among other things, is often related to pseudo science.

Principle 5

Communication

Considering how communication has changed in the last years, it is necessary to propose new models, which reinforce the reputation and credibility of the institutions; they have to be well planned, prompt, coherent, coordinated, proactive, dialogue based, and they have to include the new social media.

5.1 Try to strengthen the trust between doctors and parents; try to build a more human relationship, which favours the dialogue between institution and people.

5.2 Commit healthcare offices to use all the media available, and in particular encourage them to create a dialogue with the citizens on social networks/blogs/internet sites and use trained staff to spread and protect the correct information on the internet.

5.3 Invest any resource to identify and train one or more persons, specialized in vaccines and whose task is to communicate with mass media, in order to guarantee an accurate and prompt information.

5.4 Commit healthcare services/vaccine clinics to plan and sign: communication protocols for the management of any vaccine-related event, protocols for the management of the so called hesitancy.

5.5 Encourage the training of all the healthcare professionals who work in communication, so that they can cooperate in creating efficient and effective strategies.

5.6 Invest any resource into activities who encourage the management of trust and reputation, in order to improve credibility and reputation of healthcare services.

5.7 Try to keep good relationships with friends and acquaintances who didn't vaccinate their child or themselves for a matter of hesitation, in order to bring them to a better knowledge of vaccines, using the official instruments provided by the scientific community.

Principle 6

Quality

Like every medical activity, vaccines have to fulfil quality requirements. Healthcare services (i.e Vaccine clinics) must rely on adequate financial resources, with a constantly up-to-date staff.

6.1 Encourage the adoption of strategies which improve the quality of vaccination services, guaranteeing all the money needed. Write national, regional, and local plans who identify in a clear way the correct pre and post vaccine administration procedures; guarantee that those procedures are based on the best and updated scientific evidences.

6.2 Create simple and effective mechanisms for people to report any violation of vaccine protocols; guarantee control organs prompt interventions.

6.3 Implement, in order to strengthen the cooperation with the citizens, a system of feedbacks, through, for example, online or paper surveys.

6.4 Develop more comfortable vaccine services which favour the perception of a place in which people can find support and attention.

6.5 Guarantee a proper amount of time for every person during the administration of the vaccine.

6.6 Encourage the collection of an accurate pre vaccine history. When the administration of the vaccine is preceded by an appointment with the pediatrician, invite to a better synergy between the doctor and the vaccine clinic.

6.7 Encourage the constant training of the health professionals (pediatricians, vaccine administerers.)

6.8 Guarantee an adequate assistance to whomever has to handle with an adverse event to a vaccine, helping them with the reporting procedure and providing for any support to the families.

6.9 Add vaccines to the Diagnostic Therapeutic Assistance Protocol for the chronic patients, according to their risk conditions.

Possible situations of use

We propose a series of possible situations of how people can use this Charter. The following subjects can refer to the actions below, but they can also decide to extend their adhesion with action who aren't mentioned in this list, or, vice versa, they can decide to choose some of them only.



1) HEALTHCARE OFFICE (ASL)

Guarantee the access to vaccines through a high quality service who works with the proper monetary resources, in comfortable places where the staff is highly qualified, careful to the parents need for information.

Actions: **1.1** **1.2** **1.3** **1.4** **2.6** **3.1** **3.2** **3.3** **3.4** **3.6** **3.8** **3.9** **3.10** **4.4**
5.2 **5.3** **5.4** **5.5** **5.6** **5.7** **6.1** **6.2** **6.3** **6.4** **6.5** **6.6** **6.7** **6.8**



2) Institutions (schools, universities, workplaces)

Promote the scientific culture in every school and University. Engage in teaching parents and students, beginning with how to collect the right information on the internet.

Actions: **2.5** **3.5** **3.6** **3.11**



3) Healthcare professionals

Promote the social importance of vaccines and scientific culture, encouraging the spread of the principles of the Charter. Engage in sensitizing and informing patients about the opportunities of preventions given by vaccines and guaranteeing updated information by answering citizens FAQ (frequently asked questions).

Actions: **2.2** **2.7** **3.6** **3.7** **3.8** **3.11** **4.1** **4.2** **4.5** **4.6** **5.5** **5.7** **6.7** **6.8**



4) Citizens

Engage in the spreading of the Charter, encouraging the comprehension of the importance of vaccines and promoting actively the scientific culture; engage in contrasting disinformation.

Actions: **2.1** **2.2** **2.4** **2.5** **2.7** **3.6** **4.2** **4.3** **4.5** **5.7**



5) Journalists/bloggers

Engage actively in the spread of the Charter both online and offline, encouraging the community to participate in the sharing of its principles and favouring the comprehension of the social importance of vaccines. Engage in not spreading false information, in not committing mistakes reporting information and scientific news, and in reinforcing the trust between parents and doctors.

Actions: **2.1** **2.2** **2.4** **2.5** **3.5** **3.6** **4.2** **4.5** **4.6** **5.1**



A call for action

The benefits deriving from the diffusion and social acceptance of the vaccines are well known. The vaccines positive impact on health and economy is sustained by many scientific evidences. In order to obtain a better commitment to improve the acceptance of the vaccines, it is necessary a strong spur for an action of advocacy. The Charter outlines six principles and many actions which can be promoted by anyone who can or wants to carry on any specific action in their work field. The application of the Charter will be, for anyone interested, a guide for a health improvement thanks to the diffusion of vaccine culture.

HELP US TO STOP THE SPREADING OF ONLINE HOAXES. HOW?

- Search on google
- Look for it in an encyclopedia
- Ask an expert
- Do some research before sharing a post
- Stop sharing before having verified

WORDS AND IMAGES PUT TOGETHER DO NOT MAKE ANY NEWS TRUE. STOP CONTRIBUTING TO IGNORANCE!

Source: www.butac.it

We invite all the parts interested in that purpose to support and adopt the Italian Charter for the vaccine promotion, and to commit to one or more of the following actions:

1. Express their consent on the principles and actions coming from them, giving their adhesion to the Italian Charter for vaccines promotion;
2. Share copies of the Charter with anyone interested or that could be interested in spreading its principles;
3. Meet the institutions and anyone who has the power of decision, to discuss on how positively plans and local politics can integrate through cross actions;
4. Build networks and partnerships to support and apply the Charter;
5. Put forward as much actions as possible, respecting the principle of the Charter. Engage in not supporting any action against them.

At the same time, the members of TeamVaxItalia, who have written this charter, commit themselves to the following actions:

- Give the Chart the maximum spread;
- Cooperate with networks and other organizations interested in spreading science in order to activate and commit public administrations at any levels, and improve their commitment to the promotion of vaccines;
- Give all the realities who adopted the Charter and all the initiatives coming from its adoption the maximum visibility;
- Create a system of collecting all the reportings coming from the community in case of violation of the principles of the Charter;
- Propose and accept any revision of the Charter in order to enlarge the number of its actions.

For any further information about the Italian Charter for vaccines promotion, please consult the site: **www.teamvaxitalia.it**

What is TeamVaxItalia

TeamVaxItalia is an organization born in Fano, in October 2015 and reunites a group of Healthcare professionals, Students, Bloggers and Parents with the purpose of spreading the correct information about vaccines. The team is a network of resources operating both online and offline. The catchment area they reach, both on the web and on social networks, can be ideally quantified in about 150,000/250,000 people, whom TeamVax offers a service of support and correct information about science, and, in particular, about vaccines.

The Italian Charter for vaccines promotion is written and organized by TeamVaxItalia



ARE YOU A SUPPORTER OF VACCINE PLANS? WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE TEAM? DO YOU WANT TO ADHERE TO THE CHARTER? PLEASE VISIT: WWW.TEAMVAXITALIA.IT

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