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Qualitative research for improving Access to Vaccination for Newly Arrived Migrants (AcToVx4NAM)

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Background:
Increasing vaccination uptake among vulnerable groups constitutes a high priority across Europe. Access to Vaccination for Newly Arrived Migrants (AcToVx4NAM) is a 3-year project (Grant n 101018349, 3rd EU Health Programme) with a mission to increase vaccination uptake in Newly Arrived Migrants (NAM) regardless of legal status. AcToVx4NAM will improve health system Vaccination Literacy (VL) and vaccination access, by making access conditions more equitable and guaranteed.

Methods:
Across 8 countries research took place to identify barriers, enablers and solutions to system level problems. Qualitative analysis through focus groups and interviews took place with professionals who work with NAMs including administrative personnel, cultural mediators, policy officers as well as physicians, nurses, social and mental health care professionals. Research examined barriers across the different dimensions that constitute the ActoVax4NAM General Conceptual Framework namely Entitlement, Reachability - Adherence (vs. hesitancy), Achievement of vaccination (execution and completion) and Evaluation.

Results:
A number of common system level barriers were identified related to gaps in the registration process and problems in reaching people eligible for vaccinations. Not all NAMs face the same problems in terms of accessing the health system (i.e asylum seekers vs economic migrants). Communication breaks exist between the various services involved with delivering care and vaccination to NAMs while the lack of appropriate culturally sensitive and appropriate informative material still remains. The role of non-medical personnel in promoting vaccinations was emphasized as well as the importance of evaluating and disseminating best practice.

Conclusions:
Findings direct to specific evidence based solutions with an emphasis on tailored made to specific needs activities.

Key messages:
- Shift focus from individual level barriers to system level barriers considering all hubs of the vaccination process.
- Address vaccination needs of NAM early to stress the importance of prevention in the health integration process.