



Spain Country Report 2022

Influencing Adult Pneumonia Vaccination Policy

Authors

Dr. Jane Barratt

Ms. Katrina Bouzanis

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Background

By 2050, over 40% of Spain's population is expected to be over the age of 60 years, representing over 18 million and increasing by approximately 15% over the next 30 years.^{1,2} In Spain, there is a significant burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), exacerbated by an ageing population, with NCDs accounting for 91% of all deaths.³ Cardiovascular diseases, cancers and respiratory diseases account for 28%, 26% and 10% of deaths respectively.³ Older people and adults experiencing NCDs are at risk of contracting and experiencing adverse effects from vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs), including pneumococcal pneumonia.⁴

In Spain, the incidence of community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) in those over 65 years is estimated at 14 cases per 1000 person-years, which doubles in those over 85 years old.^{5,6} In 2017, deaths due to pneumonia were over 10 times higher in those over 70 years old compared with all other age groups, with an incidence of 181.41 per 100 000 people.^{7,8} The 50 to 69 year old age group experiences the second highest annual number of deaths due to pneumonia (9.03 per 100 000 people).^{7,8} A 2017 study indicated that approximately half of Catalanian adults over 50 years are estimated to have risk conditions for pneumococcal disease.⁹ These findings highlight the importance of pneumococcal vaccination to prevent pneumonia in older people and other adult at-risk groups, such as those with NCDs.

In Spain, pneumococcal vaccination is recommended for older adults and at-risk adults experiencing chronic disease.¹⁰ This information is primarily available on the Ministry of Health, Consumption and Social Welfare website.¹⁰ The PneuVUE study examining pneumonia vaccination in older adults in nine countries across Europe found that over half of those surveyed in Spain feel they are not at all informed on vaccination against pneumonia and only 22% are aware that a vaccination is available for pneumonia.¹¹

Pneumonia Vaccine Policy in Spain

In Spain, the Ministry of Health, Consumption and Social Welfare of the General Administration (*Ministerio de Sanidad, Consumo y Bienestar Social*) is responsible for establishing health policy.¹²

Vaccination policy is specifically designated to the General Directorate of Public Health, Quality and Innovation.¹² Regional health authorities are then responsible for the implementation of health policy.¹² The Inter-territorial Council of the National Health System (*Consejo Interterritorial del Sistema Nacional de Salud* [CISNS]) provides coordination between central and regional authorities.^{12,13} The CISNS includes the Commission of Public Health, coordinated by the General Directorate of Public Health, Quality and Innovation.¹² This body is responsible for developing the vaccination schedule, and evaluating the immunization programme and initiatives to promote vaccination.¹² The CISNS is advised by the Committee of Vaccines Program and Registry (*Ponencia de Programa y Registro de Vacunaciones*) on prevention and control of vaccine preventable diseases.¹⁴ The Spanish Agency for Medicines and Health Products (*Agencia Española de Medicamentos y Productos Sanitarios*) authorizes and distributes vaccinations.¹²

In Spain, pneumococcal vaccination is recommended for those 65 years of age and older. Those over 65 years with no risk conditions are recommended to receive one dose of the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine.¹⁰ Certain adult at-risk groups with chronic disease are recommended to receive the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, with a booster every 5 years.¹⁵ These groups include people with chronic cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, chronic liver disease and diabetes.¹⁵ Other at-risk groups, particularly those with immunodeficiencies, are recommended a dose of each pneumococcal vaccine (polysaccharide and conjugate), separated by 12 months.¹²



Spanish Agency for Medicines and Health Products

The Spanish Agency for Medicines and Health Products (*Agencia Española de Medicamentos y Productos Sanitarios*), responsible for authorizing and distributing vaccinations,¹³ features information on pneumococcal vaccines including a package leaflet with user information and technical specifications.^{23,34}

Non-Government Pneumonia Vaccine Information

Cardioalianza

Cardioalianza is a Spanish association of heart patients and unites various organizations representing patients with heart disease.²⁵ Cardioalianza has an annual campaign to promote influenza and pneumococcal vaccination in cardiovascular disease patients. In 2019, the campaign included in-person information sessions throughout Spain, brochures for patients (Figure 3), an informative blog and posts on social media channels.²⁶

Spanish Society of Cardiology

The Spanish Society for Cardiology provides resources for health professionals, including a video, slide show and consensus document.²⁷ Materials that encourage health professionals to promote vaccination to at-risk patients include information on the burden of CAP in Spain, including incidence, morbidity and mortality, age as a risk factor for pneumonia and information on vaccination.²⁷

LA ENFERMEDAD NEUMOCÓCICA EN CIFRAS

La **infección neumocócica** y en especial la **enfermedad neumocócica invasiva (ENI)** es una importante causa de morbilidad y mortalidad en el mundo y la principal causa de mortalidad potencialmente prevenible mediante vacunación.

Las infecciones más comunes son sinusitis, infección del oído, sepsis (reacción inflamatoria severa del cuerpo a la infección) y meningitis. Sin embargo, la forma grave de enfermedad neumocócica invasiva más común es la **neumonía neumocócica** (infección de los pulmones).

Esta enfermedad representa un importante problema de salud pública en personas mayores y adultos más jóvenes con factores de riesgo, de los países desarrollados.

Letalidad estimada de la **ENI**:



REDUCCIÓN DE RIESGOS PARA EL PACIENTE CARDIOVASCULAR

La **vacunación antineumocócica** en estos pacientes reduce de forma significativa el número de eventos cardiovasculares mayores al año de seguimiento (muerte u hospitalización por síndrome coronario agudo, por insuficiencia cardíaca o por ictus).

En aquellos pacientes cardíacos con al menos una patología crónica asociada, como la hipertensión, el asma, la diabetes o el cáncer, se reduce el riesgo de accidentes cardiovasculares y cerebro-vasculares durante los tres primeros días de infección.

Figure 3. Brochure on pneumococcal vaccination for cardiovascular patients from Cardioalianza.

Status of National Pneumonia Vaccination Messaging

Changing the Conversation on Adult Influenza Vaccination identifies seven components of effective adult influenza campaigns.²⁸ These components are presented in Table 1 to evaluate pneumonia vaccination messaging in Spain.

Table 1. Status of pneumonia vaccination messaging in Spain.

Well-developed

Partially developed

Not yet developed/No evidence

	Description	Pneumonia Vaccination
Comprehensive policies and programs	Vaccination is recommended by government and advisory bodies for at-risk populations including older adults and people with chronic diseases.	Well-developed Pneumococcal vaccination is recommended by governments and advisory bodies for adults 65 years of age and older, and adults with chronic diseases.
	Vaccination is funded under the National Immunization Program (NIP) and administered through the state program for at-risk populations including older adults and people with chronic disease.	Partially developed Pneumococcal vaccination is free to adults over the age of 65 years ²⁹ however this information is not widely noted in public health messaging.
Clear communication strategy	Published context-specific communication strategy and action plan which defines goals, targets audiences, expected roles of partner organizations, communication tools and timeline.	Not yet developed/No evidence No evidence of published action plan for communication on pneumococcal vaccination.
Well-defined audience	Universal message distributed to undifferentiated populations (general audiences regardless of age and underlying health condition).	Not yet developed/No evidence Pneumococcal vaccination messaging prioritizes at-risk groups, including children, older people and at-risk groups experiencing chronic disease.
	Dedicated and tailored information for specific at-risk audience.	Partially developed
Multiple tools and channels	Online communication such as web content, digital technology, social media, online publications, email.	Partially developed Information on pneumococcal vaccination is most often available via online web pages, which requires active searching. There is very little evidence of offline or interactive messaging campaigns, with the exception of a campaign run by Cardioalianza, which included in-person information sessions and brochures targeting cardiovascular disease patients.
	Messages are disseminated offline by TV, radio, printout (e.g., leaflet, poster, brochure, outdoor ads).	Partially developed
	Interactive communication including individual consultation, street campaign and face-to-face mobilization.	Partially developed



Realistic timeline

Timely vaccination reminder.

National/regional events scheduled for intensive awareness campaign such as national vaccination day/week/month.

Some evidence of vaccination reminders in the winter months, however there are no intensive campaigns surrounding key awareness events.

Regular updates of information

Information is updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent evidence and policy, such as recommending newly licensed vaccines for specific recipient.

Information on pneumococcal vaccination reflects most recent evidence on both the available vaccines and scheduling of doses.

Engagement of civil society

Communication by patient associations, ageing organizations and advocacy groups.

Web pages and online resources on general pneumococcal vaccination are available, however robust campaigns are lacking. Organizations representing key groups often omit information on vaccination.

Patient organizations focusing on respiratory health and ageing do not provide information pneumococcal vaccination despite its recommendation in at-risk groups of interests.



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International Federation on Ageing
1 Bridgepoint Drive, Suite G.238
Toronto, ON, M4M 2B5, Canada

www.vaccines4life.com

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