




Practice factsheet: Communication initiatives including reminder schemes to support childhood immunisation (Denmark)

The Danish health authorities have been working with different initiatives to increase vaccination coverage and strengthen programme resilience. These include digital reminders, training vaccination ambassadors, and communication campaigns. The practice targets parents of children aged 3 months to 12 years and covers vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, Hib bacteria, polio and pneumococcal disease and human papilloma virus (HPV), and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

The reminder scheme notifies parents of upcoming or past vaccination dates. To ensure that citizens are well informed on vaccination options and procedures, the Danish Health Authority launched the concept of “vaccination ambassadors”: home-visiting nurses who receive training in vaccinology and communication specifically to address vaccine hesitancy. Home-visiting nurses play an important role in children’s health as advisors and communicators.

Different aspects of the Childhood Immunisation Programme efficiently counteract challenges such as inefficient data collection, lack of vaccination monitoring, and the absence of accessible public information. For instance, the Danish vaccination register, to which the reminder schemes are linked, updates vaccination data in real time and has comprehensive vaccination tracking capabilities through monitoring different age groups, regions and vaccine types. This provides a systemic approach to vaccination implementation and monitoring.

Childhood immunisation/vaccination programme	Denmark
	<p>Governance level: national</p>
	<p>Funding source: national funding</p>
	<p>Vaccine(s) covered:</p> <p>3 months: diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Hib and pneumococcal disease</p> <p>5 months: diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Hib and pneumococcal disease</p>

12 months: diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Hib and pneumococcal disease

15 months: MMR: measles, mumps and rubella

4 years: MMR: measles, mumps and rubella

5 years: diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio booster

12 years: HPV (2 doses)



Barriers that can be removed by the practice: inefficient or ineffective data collection; inefficient/lack of unified immunisation monitoring and information system; lack of (accessible) information for public.



Target group: parents to children aged 3 months to 12 years.



Approach of the practice: this vaccination programme includes a reminder scheme, vaccination ambassadors, communication campaigns, and a research study to demonstrate the effectiveness and outcomes of the practice. In Denmark, all recommended childhood vaccinations are administered free of charge by general practitioners. However, vaccination rates for MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-polio have been below 90%, mainly due to parents forgetting the vaccination. Therefore, reminder schemes based on data from civil registries and public health databases have been introduced for all childhood vaccinations.

Through digital reminders, parents are notified when it is time for their child to get vaccinated and again if the vaccination time has passed but their child has not received the vaccination as planned. This practice is based on civil registries and public health databases data, allowing Danish health authorities to monitor vaccination uptake, including the number of vaccinations administered by general practitioners, and the type and number of side effects recorded.

Vaccination ambassadors play a key role in reaching out to local communities through dialogue-based approaches to address concerns about vaccination. Health visitors regularly meet the families and children in their district and built up a strong level of trust. They work with pregnant women and visit new-borns multiple times at home during the first year of life. They meet the children again at kindergarten and school. Health visitors are able to address concerns in a trusting atmosphere and are in a perfect position to bring up the topic of vaccination.

In 2017 the information awareness campaign *Stop HPV: get vaccinated* was launched jointly by the Danish Health Authority, the Danish Cancer Society, and the Danish Medical Association. The initiative was to provide nuanced and evidence-based information about the HPV vaccine and increase immunisation coverage following a decline in uptake. The campaign was extended to include boys in 2019, meaning that boys, like girls, now receive the HPV vaccination free of charge if they were born in the latter half of 2007 or later. The campaign ended in late 2021



following the successful restoration of HPV immunisation coverage.

Vaccination journey(s) covered: journey 1 for MMR, polio: a parent or legal guardian getting their child vaccinated for MMR, meningitis, or polio.

Journey 4: An adult getting a booster vaccine for tetanus – *Note: this journey is not directly covered by the practice, which targets tetanus vaccinations among young children instead of adults. However, it is included because it is the only one of the five selected journeys covering tetanus.*



Justification for selection by evaluators:

- Well documented with approach and results shared in academic paper.
- Effectiveness and vaccination increase demonstrated in academic paper.
- Includes tetanus and polio which have not been well covered by practices received from other Member States.
- Use of database and public health data to systematically organise and implement a vaccination intervention.