



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

## Towards an EMA vaccines outreach strategy

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Patients and Consumers Working Party (PCWP) and Healthcare Professionals Working Party (HCPWP) joint meeting

25 September 2019

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Head of Stakeholders and Communication Division



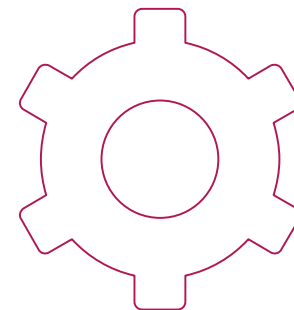
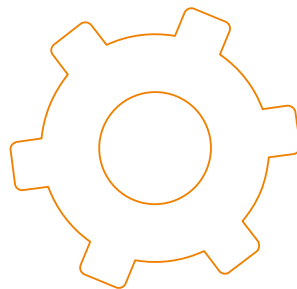
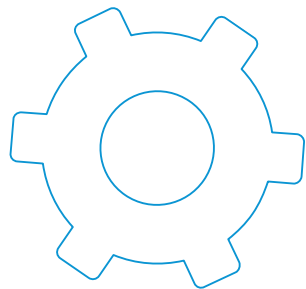


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## In this presentation



### **Why EMA needs a Vaccines Outreach Strategy?**

- Rationale
- Analysis driving EMA strategy

### **What we'd like to achieve?**

- Goal and areas of work
- Collaborating with ECDC/EC

### **How can we work with HCPWP/PCWP?**

- Opportunities for collaboration



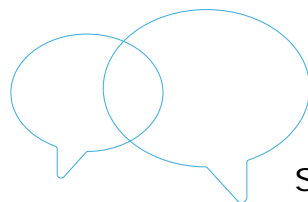
## Why outreach?

- WHO Europe region: highest scepticism on vaccine safety – measles outbreak
- Conflicting information, misinformation, manipulated information on social media: global public health threat
- Most damaging: bad science
- Educational campaigns fall short – health officials push their agenda without addressing existing perceptions



Source:

[https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/vaccination/docs/2018\\_vaccine\\_confidence\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/vaccination/docs/2018_vaccine_confidence_en.pdf)

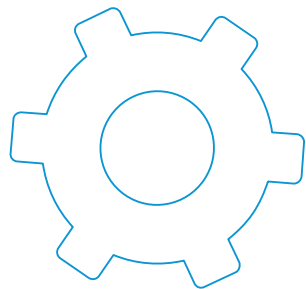


### Dialogue matters

Strategies must include listening and engagement



Source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07034-4>

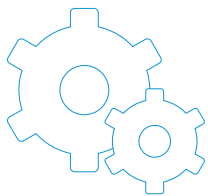


## **Why EMA needs a Vaccines Outreach Strategy?**

- Rationale
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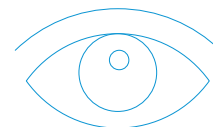


## Rationale – need for a long term approach



### **EMA's mission** **vaccine approval & monitoring**

- Communicating benefit-risk of vaccines
- Routinely handling complex vaccine queries
- Increasing public demand for facts and scientific narrative



### **Future vision**

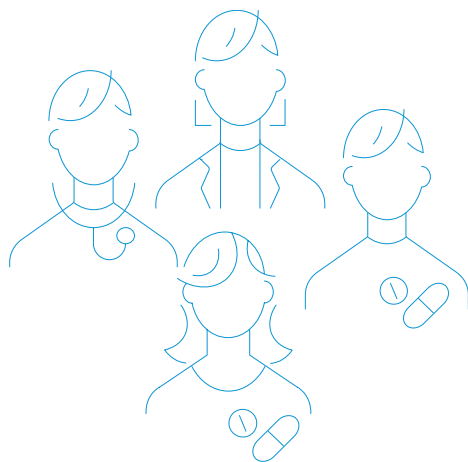
- Strengthen the regulatory science underpinning innovative approaches for development, approval and post-authorisation monitoring of vaccines
- Proactive outreach and educational efforts to key stakeholders



# Analysis



Identifying the **external trends and changes**\* that will affect the Agency and its upcoming work to increase confidence in the regulatory system for vaccines



- Environment stakeholders and publics
- Organisation challenges and opportunities

\*Gregory's book (2010) - *Planning and managing public relations campaigns: a strategic approach*

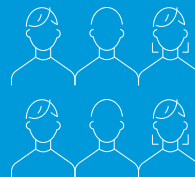


## Key outcomes from analysis

- **Mistrust** landscape: vaccine **hesitancy, misleading information** online, scepticism in public authorities
- Lack of experience dealing with **consequences of infectious diseases**
- **Gaps in knowledge** on vaccines to address public health **concerns**
- Need for easily **accessible, understandable** information balancing scientific facts and **patient-friendly** design
- Pushing out information not sufficient – **fundamental to listen and work with professionals at the forefront of patient care**
- **Education on vaccine science** emerging as a new field – leverage existing initiatives



A **proactive, long term** approach to **enhance knowledge on vaccine science** is needed



Focus efforts on **audience with genuine concerns** willing to take in the facts





## Proposed primary focus



### **Safety**



**Effectiveness** – more and more an issue. Doubts about effectiveness contribute, in addition to risk perceptions, further eroding public trust – especially considering concomitant scepticism amongst some healthcare professionals



**Confidence in Quality** - Many safety / efficacy issues derive from quality aspects

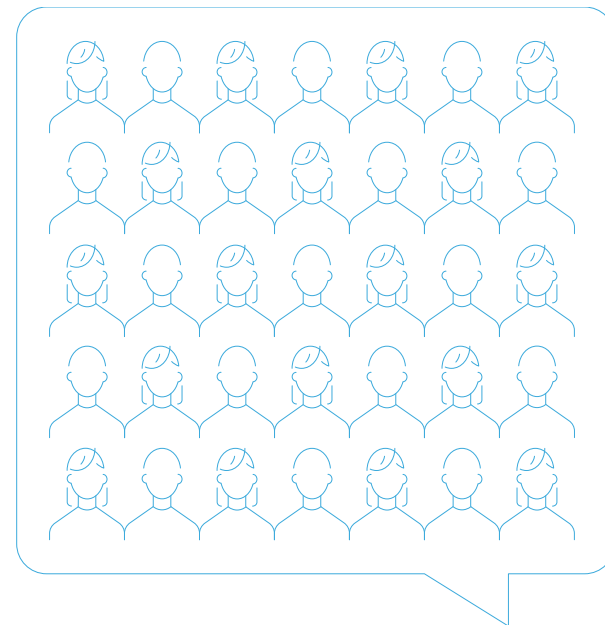


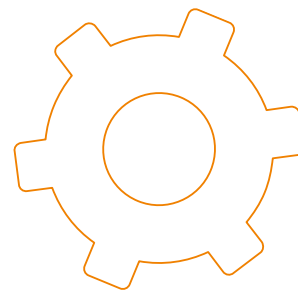
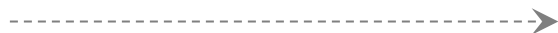
**Handling of scientific uncertainty is at the core of the exercise** - both an opportunity and threat – we should invest on how to best address and communicate it  
– Lessons learnt from HPV referral and assessment of uncertainty



## Who should we involve?

- **Patients, consumers and healthcare professionals** (including pharmacists, GPs and nurses)
- **EU experts, ECDC and European Commission**
- **NCA**s
- **Health authorities** at national level (in collaboration with ECDC)
- **International health authorities** (e.g. WHO, FDA)
- **Academia:**
  - Research agenda to drive research in areas where more scientific evidence is needed
  - Experts on vaccine science education
- **Other relevant players?**



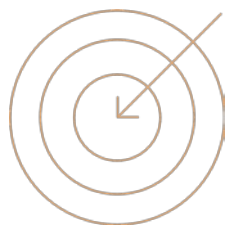


## **What we'd like to achieve?**

- Goal and areas of work
- Collaborating with ECDC/EC



## What we would like to achieve?



### Our goal

To increase knowledge of and trust in the quality, safety and effectiveness of vaccines, and empower the EU public and healthcare professionals to take well-informed vaccination decisions.

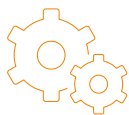


## How are we planning to achieve it? Focus areas (1)



### **New vaccine information and educational materials &**

Patients, consumers, academics and healthcare professionals as **advocates on vaccine science**



**Continuous monitoring of public perception**, including through continuous dialogue and engagement with stakeholders



### **Maximise communication channels/tools**

Identify **new channels** and opportunities to enhance vaccine knowledge



**Coordinate public health messages on vaccines across the EU Network** and with **international partners**



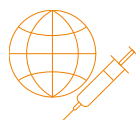
## How are we planning to achieve it? Focus areas (2)



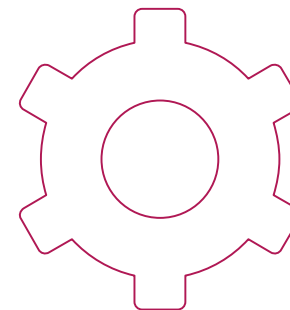
**Engage with academia** to drive research in areas where further scientific evidence regarding the benefit/risk of vaccination is considered important



**Disseminate new data generated post-authorisation** on the impact of vaccination



**Support** the Agency's activities to increase **preparedness for public health threats/pandemics**



## **How can we work with HCPWP/PCWP?**

- Opportunities for collaboration



## Collaborating with the European Commission and ECDC

EMA is **supporting the ongoing work** of EU countries and the European Commission

- **EC Council Recommendation**
- **ECDC's portal**
- **Member States' Joint Action** on Vaccination







# Opportunities for collaboration



## HCPWP/PCWP

- Input into ECDC portal and EMA materials
- User-testing

## Discussion with academics working on vaccine educational initiatives

- With representative from HCPWP/PCWP
- International partners & WHO

## Workshop on vaccines 2021 HCPWP/PCWP



# Thank you for your attention

## Further information

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# Vaccine queries - a valuable tool for listening to vaccine concerns

- Many queries on vaccines from patients, carers and healthcare professionals
- Often complex queries from anti-vaccine campaigners, academics, MEPs or EC
  - Pandemrix and narcolepsy
  - HPV vaccines
  - MMR and autism
  - Adjuvants, e.g. squalene, thiomersal / mercury, aluminium
  - autoimmunity
  - impurities
  - too many vaccines
  - neurological events
  - unspecific events
  - safety-trial methodologies

