

Break-out group 3: lessons learnt from Ireland how to mitigate a crisis

- In Ireland, the upcoming harm of the anti-HPV vaccination lobby was underestimated.
- The power of social media was not recognized early enough.
- Ireland is beginning to avert the crisis / it takes sustained effort.
- Public perception fueled by REGRET that promotion of the HPV vaccination campaign was funded by Merck/GSK contributed to the crisis. Public health actors should have been more upfront to tell the public that this was false.



Break-out group 3: lessons learnt from Ireland how to mitigate a crisis

- Focus groups indicated that the Irish respect the official position of WHO concerning HPV vaccination more than they do the position of Irish officials.
- Unlike the situation for other vaccine-preventable diseases the public has little perception of the importance of HPV infection. This calls for information campaigns.
- Physicians and healthcare providers have limited time during a primary care consultation to assuage parents' concerns / they are not paid for the counselling time.
- As the crisis evolved public health staff were initially unsure about the adverse events and thought they were real and much worse than their superiors made them believe.



Break-out group 3: lessons learnt from Ireland how to mitigate a crisis

- Recommendations:
 - be more proactive; use a war games perspective.
 - Include a budget for communication/education when launching a campaign.
 - Adopt a proper framework for surveillance of social media.
 - Acknowledge the symptoms/syndromes of those affected by them.
 - Create informative websites.
 - Educate teachers, they are the line of first resistance against anti-vaccine activism.
 - Restore confidence among public health staff. They were initially unsure about the adverse events and thought they were real and much worse. Clear messages circulated within the first response team are important.
 - In school-based vaccination programs, messages must be prepared on a timely basis and a close link with school officials should be maintained.

