

Commitment of Measles Elimination in Malaysia: Progress and Challenges

Thilaka Chinnayah, Wan Mansor Hamzah, Rohani Jahis, Intan Azura Mhd Din

Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Johor, Jabatan Kesihatan Pulau Pinang, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia, Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Jasin

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Malaysia did not achieve the target for measles elimination programme (MEP) in 2018 resulting in a revised target being set for 2023. A study was conducted to determine the status of elimination and factors affecting this process. **METHODS:** We conducted a descriptive study by reviewing a secondary data from the national web-based measles surveillance system (2006-2016), outbreak reports and vaccine coverage data at three levels of healthcare facilities (state, districts and health centres) and assessed MEP surveillance indicators for 2016. We interviewed staffs on response activities following measles outbreaks using a structured questionnaire based on "Measles Elimination Guidelines 2015". **RESULTS:** Incidence of measles in 2016 was 3 per million populations with increasing trend every three years. Most affected were those aged <15 years (76%), of whom 29% were infants. Fifty percent of cases were unvaccinated, mainly due to vaccine refusal and taking alternative medicine (47%). The state and district MCV1 coverage were above 95%. Some health centres had coverages of 75-90% (below target). Only 72% of laboratory results were available within four days of specimen receipt. Seventy eight percent of staff involved in response activities was noncompliant with the guidelines. **CONCLUSIONS:** Low vaccine coverage at pockets and delayed laboratory results has hindered elimination and these issues are being addressed. Supplementary immunization activity targeting children below 15 years is now done in low coverage areas. We recommend follow up campaigns three yearly, strengthen health promotion, enhance staff training and better co-ordination with laboratories for early results to ensure elimination.

KEYWORDS: measles, elimination, MCV, challenges

Community Health Engagement and Its Outcome During Pacific Partnership Exercise - MAF Experience

Mohamed Zaki Mohamed Mokhtar, MPH

Military Medical Operations, Joint Force Headquarters, Kuala Lumpur

ABSTRACT

Pacific Partnership began as a military-led humanitarian response to one of the world's most catastrophic natural disaster brought by the December 2004 Tsunami that swept through parts of South and Southeast Asia. Correspondingly in 2006 the US spearhead the inaugural Pacific Partnership mission and since then has evolved from a mission focused on direct assistance, to one that emphasizes regional resiliency, interoperability and security through disaster risk reduction engagement activities. For this, various programmes are carried out and Community Health Engagement holds an important role to bring about the best of civilian-military cooperation in preparation for any HADR efforts in Malaysia and the Indo-Pacific region in general. 2019 marks the 14th year of Pacific Partnership and the 4th year of Malaysia's participation. This study intends to give an overview of the Community Health Engagements conducted during this mission and its outcome in the Malaysian Armed Forces perspective.

KEYWORDS: Pacific Partnership, Community Health Engagement, Malaysian Armed Forces, HADR