

Demythifying the Concept of Vial Fever in Context of COVID-19 Vaccine

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ABSTRACT

If 2020 was all about Staying Alive then hopefully 2021 would be remembered as the year of vaccines that has come up with a fresh set of challenges with introduction of COVID-19 vaccines, making a steady progress towards the end of COVID-19 pandemic. In the upcoming few years, the nations and healthcare sectors will face the intimidating task of distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines worldwide. This global urgency is often called as Vial fever. The myths about acceptability, procurement, storage, distribution and monitoring of COVID-19 vaccines are evolving day by day. In order to refute such myths, the newer concepts like Dry Run need to be introduced to ensure effective preparedness for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out.

Keywords: Vial fever, COVID-19 vaccines, Dry Run.

BACKGROUND

If 2020 was all about Staying Alive then hopefully 2021 would be remembered as the year of vaccines that has come up with a fresh set of challenges with introduction of COVID-19 vaccines, making a steady progress towards the end of COVID-19 pandemic. In the upcoming few years, the nations and healthcare sectors will face the intimidating task of distribution and

administration of COVID-19 vaccines worldwide. This global urgency is often called as Vial fever. ^[1]

In the recent time, India had approved two COVID-19 vaccines namely, Oxford-Astra Zeneca's Covishield manufactured by the Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin. ^[2]

Owing to the emergency approval of the current COVID-19 vaccines in use, the developing nations like India are going to face many challenges in the near future. The primary challenge will be the procurement of the cost effective and practical vaccine preferably the indigenous ones. The secondary challenge would be the designing and adaptation of vaccine supply chain. The vaccine supply chain is a five-tiered entity which includes vaccine stores at national and regional levels with centres at state, district and community levels. Another major challenge would be the post-distribution monitoring to track any possible adverse events following immunisation (AEFI). In addition to this, there would be a urgent need of ethical and equitable distribution plan through an unbiased process of proper planning and execution for overall coverage and safe administration of COVID-19 vaccines. This would be possible through the application of IT-based

tracking and analysis system like Co-WIN [3], which is a data based online platform dedicated for monitoring the delivery of COVID-19 vaccine, deployment of team members, and testing recipients.

The myths about acceptability, procurement, storage, distribution and monitoring of COVID-19 vaccines are evolving day by day. In order to refute such myths, the newer concepts like Dry Run [4] need to be introduced to ensure effective preparedness for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out.

DISCUSSION

The main objective behind conducting the dry run for COVID-19 vaccine was to assess operational feasibility in the usage of Co-WIN application in the field environment, for testing the linkages between planning and implementation and for identifying the challenges and guide way forward prior to actual implementation of the immunization drive. This was also done to boost up morale and give confidence to the programme managers at various levels for overall coverage. The entire focus of practising dry run was to ensure effective preparedness for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. It also included mock drills of session sites, testing of beneficiaries, checking cold storage, transportation arrangements handling crowd at the immunization site, and to maintain physical distancing.

CONCLUSION

All in all, the dry run is the ray of hope for finding the best way to demythify the concept of vial fever in context of COVID-19 vaccine in true sense.

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