CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATION

by:
Aileen S. Villanueva, RN

The country is facing now with the controversial issues about commonly used vaccine among children and it has a big impact on health workers on how to gain back the trust of the community when it comes to childhood immunization. Immunization is a lifesaving intervention used to control and potentially eliminate vaccine preventable diseases. Immunization has important health benefits and can lead to eradication of diseases. The health allies shall work hard again to emphasize the importance of immunization programs. Some of the things to consider are the parents views about immunization, other parents may have limited information or incorrect information that can be corrected by the health workers, proper communication and counseling can fill the gaps in parent’s knowledge about potential benefits and harms associated with both immunization and choosing not to immunize. Parents have a duty to make decisions in the best interests of their children.

Health care practitioners play an important part with this issue, public educational campaigns and information dissemination should be the main priority. Parents consider health care professionals one of the most trusted sources for answering questions and addressing concerns about their child’s health. A health care practitioner must be equipped with knowledge, expertise and advice vital in creating a safe and trusted environment for discussing childhood immunizations. Reinforcing that vaccines are safe and effective can go a long way towards assuring parents that they are doing the best thing for their children. Establishing trust with parents is by asking open ended questions to identify and address concerns they may have about vaccines, restate their questions and acknowledge concerns with empathy. A strong recommendation from health
workers can also make parents feel comfortable with their decision to vaccinate. Always emphasize that prevention is better than cure.

The government and policy makers should consider reforming compensation systems if a child suffer from a vaccine related injury so that the community feel safe and secure when it comes to health issues and benefits.

The Annual schedule immunization is developed by the Philippine Pediatric Society and the Pediatric Infectious Disease Society of the Philippines, together with the Philippine Foundation for Vaccinationis as follows:
References:

Philippine Pediatric Society, Pediatric Infectious Disease Society of the Phil.,
Philippine Foundation for Vaccinations