Seasonal influenza vaccination among older adults in Jordan

Seasonal influenza is an acute respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses which spread worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) includes older adults as one of the high-risk groups recommended for annual influenza vaccination. Influenza vaccination is the most effective way to prevent infection and severe, poor outcomes related to infection including hospitalization, morbidity and mortality. According to WHO and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), older adults are considered high risk group and should be vaccinated annually. The aim of this study was to evaluate the level of knowledge and attitudes regarding seasonal influenza vaccination among older adults in Jordan. This was a cross-sectional study in which older adults (65 years or older) were approached in two major cities in Jordan. A close-ended structured questionnaire was developed and modified by the researchers in a stepwise process based on literature review. P-value of less than 0.05 was considered the cut-off level for statistical significance. A questionnaire was collected back from 500 participants. Among study participants, only 1.2% received influenza vaccine during previous year. In assessing influenza vaccine knowledge, 60.6% of older adults believed that influenza vaccine is effective against preventing influenza; however 49.8% reported that influenza can be treated with flu vaccine. Moreover, only 27% believed it is important and only 35.6% believed that influenza vaccine can prevent serious complications in older adults. Additionally, 40.6% would take the influenza vaccine to prevent influenza. The results of this study shows extremely poor vaccination rate among older adults and poor level of influenza vaccination knowledge and beliefs.

Biography

Mera Ababneh is an Associate Professor of Clinical Pharmacy. She has obtained her PhD in Pharmacotherapy and Outcome Science from Virginia Commonwealth University. Her research interest is in infectious disease, antimicrobial stewardship programs, medication adherence and pharmacoepidemiology.