The system of vaccination in Austria

Dr. Reiner Brettenthaler
Officer for European & International Affairs
Austrian Medical Chamber

ZEVA Meeting
Bratislava, 26-27 September 2014
Overview

1. General information
2. National Vaccination Plan
3. Child Immunisation Concept
4. Duties of the vaccinating doctor
5. Problems and challenges
Vaccination is voluntary in Austria and therefore not part of the examinations laid down in the mother-child booklet.

Child benefits not tied to vaccination requirements.

Parents decide whether, when and against which diseases the child is vaccinated.
National Vaccination Plan

• Yearly **recommendations** by the Ministry of Health, advised by the National Vaccination Board, a body of medical experts.

• **Overview** of currently available vaccinations, targeted at doctors and the public

• **Primary vaccinations** (publicly financed) vs. other important vaccinations not funded by the state (e.g. FSME)
Special vaccination offers

- Yearly promotion periods during which vaccines are available at pharmacies for a reduced price
  
e.g.  
FSME (Jan.-Jul.)
Meningococcal vaccine (Apr.-Sep.)
Child immunisation concept (I)

- Introduced in 1997
- Currently **12 free vaccines for children up to 15 years**
- **Publicly funded** (2/3 federal government – ministry of health, 1/6 federal states, 1/6 social insurance institutions)
- Priorities: Common diseases & rare, serious diseases
• Free vaccinations for children aged 0-6 years
  – Hexavalent vaccination against diphteria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, hepatitis B, HIB
  – Combined vaccine against measles, mumps, rubella
  – Pneumococcal vaccine
  – Rotavirus
• **Free vaccinations at school age (7 to 15 years)**

  – Booster injections for vaccines received at the age of 0-6

  plus

  – HPV (since Feb. 2014, for boys and girls at the age of 9)

  – Meningococcal vaccine (at the age of 12)
• Vaccinations administered by a **general medical practitioner** or **pediatrician**

• in **school** by a school doctor

• at a **local health authority** (municipal or district authority)
Duties of the vaccinating doctor

- **Information** on and explanation of the disease to be prevented
- **Anamnesis** incl. current immunisation status / allergy status
- Determination of **fitness for vaccination**
- **Documentation** of the vaccination in the immunisation record card (§ 51 Austrian Medical Act)
• **Vaccination critics** (refusing vaccination on „ideological“ grounds)
• **No mandatory** vaccinations
• **No vaccination reminder system** in place for adults
• Current epidemiological situation in Austria requires higher immunisation coverage for **measles** and **influenza**
Thank you for your attention!