

## Sigma's 29th International Nursing Research Congress

### Nursing Students' Perceptions and Beliefs About Immunizations

**Kathryn Lucette Wilson, SN**

Jennifer Sjostedt Avery, PhD

School of Nursing, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI, USA

Immunizations have contributed to the health of our citizens for decades, but some citizens still have many lingering concerns about their safety and effectiveness. Nurses are on the frontline of care, serving as a main source of education and information on vaccines in today's health care system. They continue to greatly influence informed decisions about vaccinations (Wiley, 2015). To be an advocate and answer questions appropriately, nurses must be experts about immunizations, recommendations, and have access to trusted information (Danchin & Nolan, 2014; Wiley, 2015). Education and advocacy of immunizations can be enhanced by understanding the perceptions and beliefs about vaccinations as (future) nurses are still immersed in their own education. There is little research that exists on nursing students and no parallel studies were found upon review. The purpose of this study is to explore nursing students' perceptions and beliefs about immunizations and the diseases they are aimed to prevent. To further explain, the following research questions are addressed: (1) What are nursing students' perceptions of vaccinations? (2) What are nursing students' beliefs about vaccinations? (3) How do perceptions and beliefs differ between students based on their demographics? For this study, a quantitative design and convenience sample population were used. An online survey, adapted from Gellin, Maibach, & Marcuse's *Do Parents Understand Immunizations? A National Telephone Survey* (2000) was created to collect these perceptions and beliefs. Questions regarding Influenza, Human Papillomavirus, Hepatitis A, Meningococcal, and Pneumococcal vaccines were integrated to update the survey. Informed consent was obtained by each participant and all survey responses were anonymized. Data collection is currently in progress with anticipated completion prior to July 2018. At this time there are 47 subjects who have participated. The results from this study will contribute to known perceptions and beliefs of immunizations, specifically from nursing students. The results from this study can discover areas of needed improvement in nursing education.

---

#### Title:

Nursing Students' Perceptions and Beliefs About Immunizations

#### Keywords:

immunizations, nursing students and perceptions

#### References:

Casey, G. (2016). Vaccines - How and why they work. *Kai Tiaki: Nursing New Zealand*, 22(1), 20-24. Retrieved from <https://www.nzno.org.nz/>

Danchin, M., & Nolan, T. (2014). A positive approach to parents with concerns about vaccination for the family physician. *Australian Family Physician*, 43(10), 690-4. Retrieved from <https://www.racgp.org.au/afp>

Gellin, B. G., Maibach, E. W., & Marcuse, E. K. (2000). Do parents understand immunizations? A national telephone survey. *Pediatrics*, 106(5), 1097-1102. doi:10.1542/peds.106.5.1097

Hunt, C., & Arthur, A. (2012). Student nurses' reasons behind the decision to receive or decline influenza vaccine: A cross-sectional survey. *Vaccine*, 30(40), 5824-5829. doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2012.07.027

Nikula, A., Puukka, P., & Leino-Kilpi, H. (2012). Vaccination competence of graduating public health nurse students and nurses. *Nurse Education Today*, 32(8), 850-856. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2011.10.008

Wiley, S. K. (2015). Encourage patients to roll up their sleeves for influenza vaccination! *Nursing*, 45(11), 50-54. doi:10.1097/01.NURSE.0000472565.07858.53

Zhang, J., While, A. E., & Norman, I. J. (2011). Nurses' knowledge and risk perception towards seasonal influenza and vaccination and their vaccination behaviours: A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 48(10), 1281-1289. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2011.03.002

### **Abstract Summary:**

Immunizations have changed the face of health care, yet vaccine hesitancy is rising. Nurses have great influence over vaccine decisions. Nursing students' perceptions and beliefs about immunizations and the diseases they aim to prevent were explored. Results contribute to known beliefs and can contribute to improvements in nursing education.

### **Content Outline:**

One way to promote innovative nursing practice and education is by understanding how our colleagues and future nurses perceive health care practices. The following research provides an understanding on how a group of nursing students perceive immunizations, a preventative measure that has changed the face of health care.

### **Learning Objectives**

- The learner will be able to discuss nursing student's perceptions and beliefs of immunizations.
- The learner will be able to identify the difference in perceptions between the variant immunizations.

### **Background**

- Vaccine hesitancy is growing.
- Nurses play a vital role in education and advocacy of vaccinations.
- Enhancement of education and advocacy by understanding student perceptions and beliefs.

### **Purpose**

- The purpose of this study is to explore nursing students' perceptions and beliefs about immunizations and the diseases they are aimed to prevent.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

1. Research question: What are nursing students' perceptions of vaccinations?
  - Hypothesis: Nursing students will have an increased average perceived severity of disease compared to general population (previously published in another study).
  - Hypothesis: Nursing students will have an increased average perceived likelihood of infection compared to general population (previously published in another study).
  - Hypothesis: Nursing students will have a decreased perceived concern about side effects from receiving a vaccine compared to general population (previously published in another study).
2. Research question: What are nursing students' beliefs about vaccinations?
3. Research question: How do perceptions and beliefs differ between students based on their demographics?

## **Literature Review**

- Parental views
- Practicing nurses' competence
- Nursing students in Europe regarding influenza vaccine
- No parallel studies found.

## **Methodology**

- Sample population includes all nursing students at Eastern Michigan University.
- IRB approved.
- Survey was adapted from Gellin, Maibach, & Marcuse's *Do Parents Understand Immunizations? A National Telephone Survey* (2000).
- Survey link provided by email and in person.
- Informed consent and anonymous.

## **Results**

- This research is in progress with anticipated completion prior to July 2018.

## **Conclusion**

- Results of this study can contribute to known perceptions and beliefs about immunizations.
- Results from this study can be used to facilitate improvements in nursing education.

First Primary Presenting Author

### ***Primary Presenting Author***

Kathryn Lucette Wilson, SN  
Eastern Michigan University  
School of Nursing  
Undergraduate Student  
Ypsilanti MI  
USA

**Professional Experience:** 2015-Present -- Nursing student in Bachelor's of Science in Nursing program. 2016- Present -- Research on the topic of immunizations and preventable diseases while collaborating with nursing faculty to achieve research goals. 2018 -- Undergraduate Research Stimulus Program award recipient.

**Author Summary:** Kathryn Wilson is currently an undergraduate student enrolled at Eastern Michigan University. She is an honors student in pursuit of graduating with Departmental Honors. For her research efforts, Kathryn has recently been the recipient of an Undergraduate Research Stimulus Program award. She works at Beaumont Hospital in the Intermediate Care Unit as a Nursing Extern.

Second Author

Jennifer Sjostedt Avery, PhD  
Eastern Michigan University  
School of Nursing  
Assistant Professor  
Ypsilanti MI  
USA

**Professional Experience:** 2015-Present -- Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 2015 -- Adjunct Professor, School of Nursing, South University, Novi, MI 2011-2014 -- Research Assistant, Nursing Department, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 2008-2011 -- Teaching Assistant, Nursing Department, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI Mentored 11 student publications and presentations. Several awards for nursing research activities. Author or coauthor of 9 publications Numerous oral and poster presentations at professional nursing conferences. Has used quantitative study designs, as used in this research, for previous research.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Jennifer Avery is currently an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing at Eastern Michigan University teaching BSN, RN-to-BSN, and graduate programs. During her education, practice, and in previous and current teaching positions she has conducted, presented, and published countless research studies in collaboration with colleagues and students. Dr. Avery is also a member of several professional nursing organizations including Gerontological Society of America, Sigma Theta Tau International, and the Midwest Nursing Research Society.