

Engaging “natural spaces”

Immunization in a Social Media World: A communication study

Insight and Analysis from Ukraine

Brown Bag Lunch

Room 301 A/B at the MCSP Office

1776 Massachusetts Ave NW

Suite 300

Washington, District of Columbia 20036

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

Please RSVP by replying to this email or directly to Warren Feek at wfeek@comminit.com

Social media is changing the way in which public communication about health issues takes place and how the public are engaged in health services. Ukraine has significant online access and social media engagement. Ukraine also has the lowest childhood immunization rates in Europe and amongst the lowest rates in the world. There are several factors underlying this situation including vaccine supply availability and vaccine hesitancy. This discussion focuses on the communication strategy related to immunization.

What health communication strategy should we adopt and implement in a social media world in order to address issues such as low immunization rates? The predominant approach has been to implement established and rather traditional health communication strategies, including message development, producing communication products, and pushing those products to particular target audiences. Within Ukraine, USAID’s flagship Maternal and Child Survival Program, through The Communication Initiative and in partnership with UNICEF, sought to address the communications strategy question from a different perspective using social media. The questions asked were:

- Where are the natural social media spaces in which people are gathering for conversations, information, support and guidance on immunization?
- Within those spaces, what kind of questions are caregivers asking and what kind of information and ideas are they sharing related to their decisions on whether or not to have their children immunized?
- How can Ukrainian and international organizations that are seeking to boost Ukraine’s immunization and vaccine rates, and thereby improve Ukraine’s child health status, engage effectively with those people, families and communities in their own spaces?

Anna Postovoitova, Study Lead and Warren Feek, Executive Director, The Communication Initiative will present both the methodology and the major outcomes from this work at this brown bag. We would very much welcome your participation. Though this work was focused on Ukraine, the insights gained may be relevant to many other contexts. We would welcome your critique.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Maternal and Child
Survival Program**