

Oral Health Providers Perceptions of Role as Vaccinators in Medical Dental Integration Project

Background

- Human papillomavirus (HPV) is found in over 90% of cervical cancers and 70% of oropharyngeal cancers.¹
- Current vaccines offer up to 90% increased protection against oncogenic strains of the virus.²
- Vaccine hesitancy and barriers to healthcare access both create obstacles to achieve vaccine completion.²

Methods

- A cross-sectional self-administered 34 item adapted validated survey was conducted in a sample of 44 dental providers, hygienists, and dental staff.
- Six dental clinics within a federally qualified health center participated.
- Clinics were participating in a project to provide same day HPV vaccinations utilizing medical-dental integration (MDI).
- Results were analyzed on a 3-5 point Likert scale.

Results

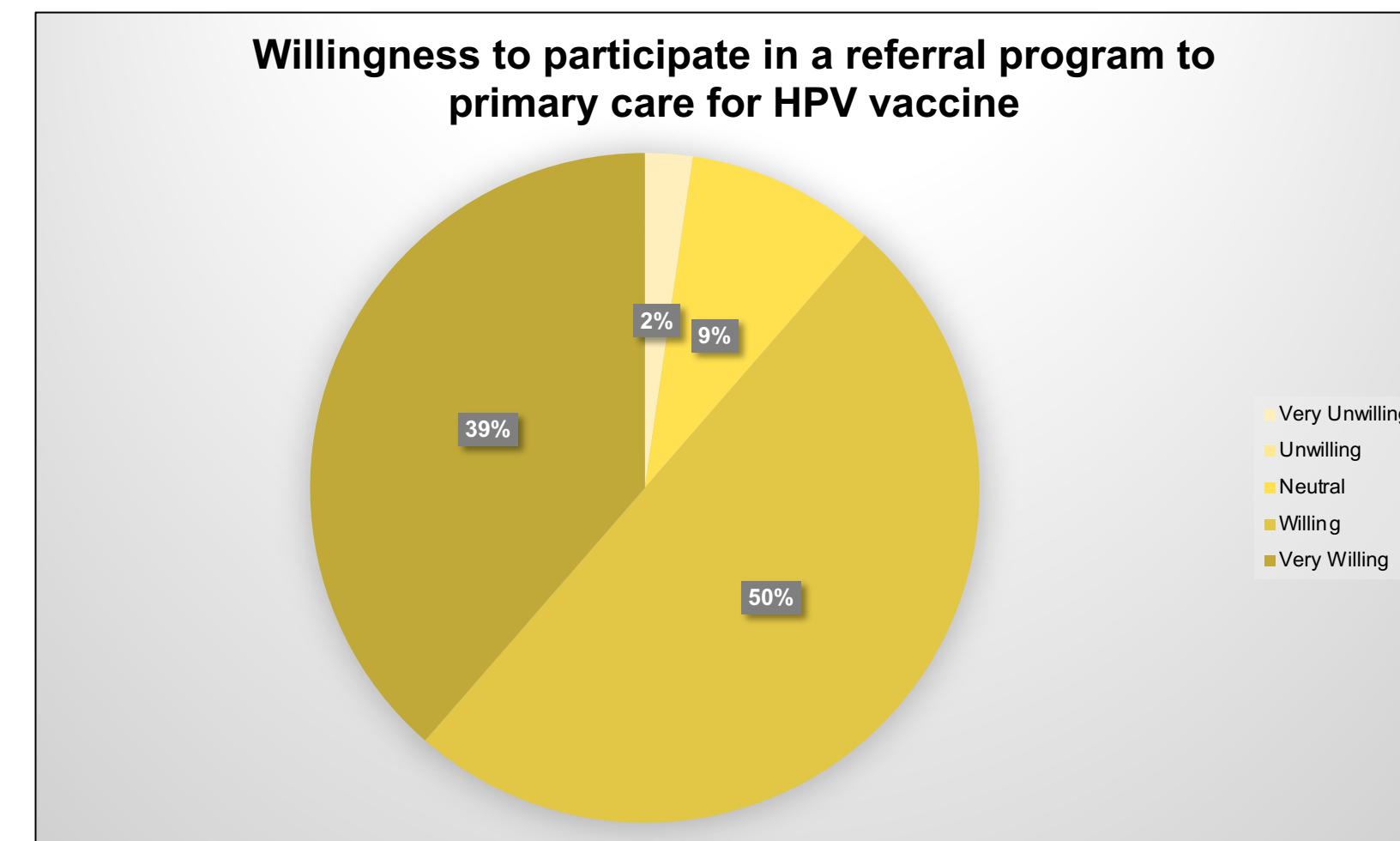


Figure 1.

- 88.6% of all staff were “very willing” or “willing” to participate in a referral program to primary care for vaccination (Figure 1).
- 95.0% of surveyed dentists and hygienists believed discussing the link between HPV and oropharyngeal cancer fell within their practice scope (N = 20).

- 65.0% of surveyed dentists and hygienists felt administering the vaccine itself was within their scope (Figure 2).
- The majority of those who responded (86.4%) were “very willing” or “willing” to have front desk staff or other personnel identify vaccine eligible patients during the check-in process and counsel eligible patients about the HPV vaccine.

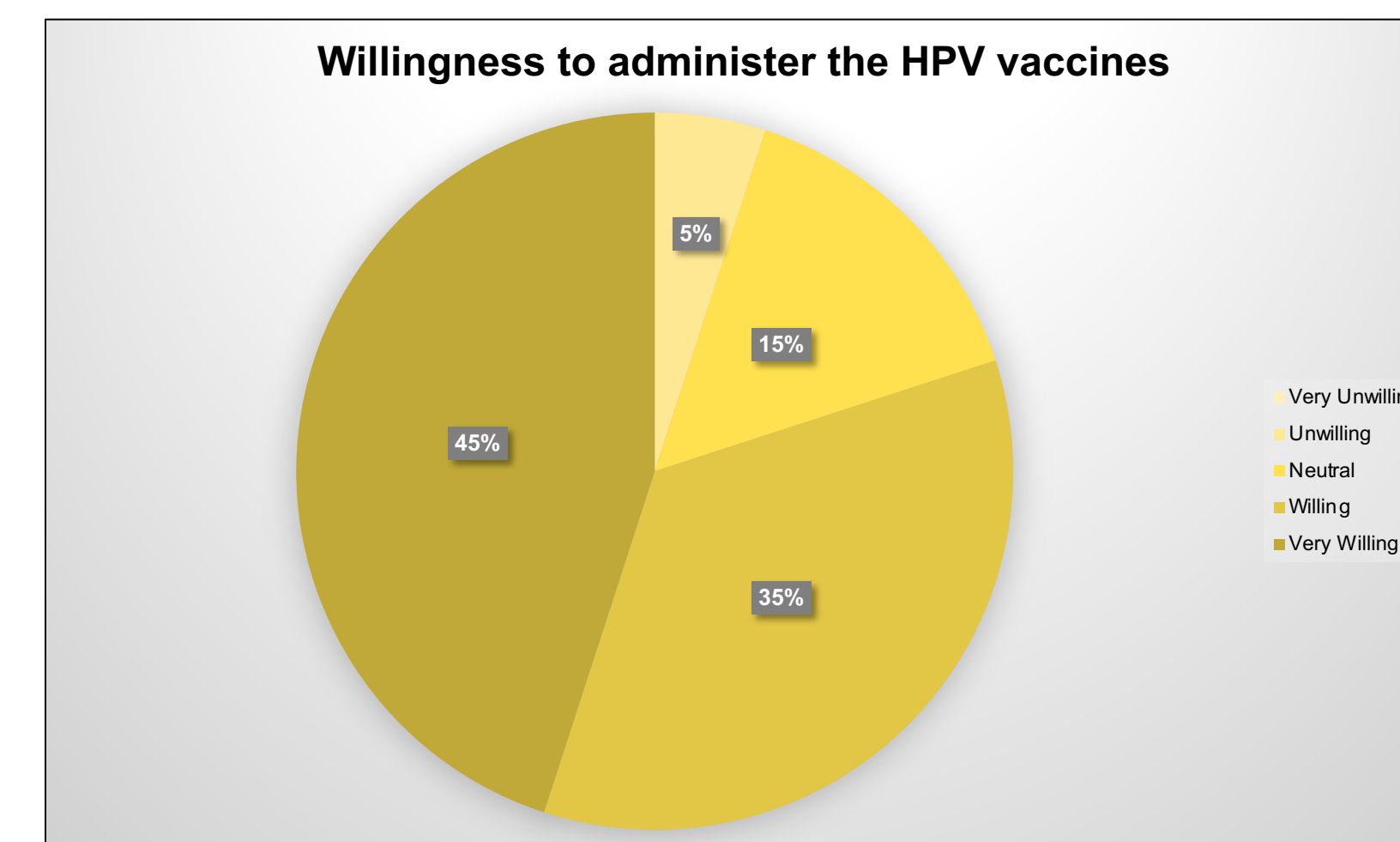


Figure 2.

Conclusions

- Dental providers feel educating regarding and vaccinating against HPV is within their scope.
- Utilizing the bi-annual touchpoint of this type of practice within an integrated health system is an opportunity to increase vaccination in pediatric populations.
- Integrated health systems are exceptionally fit to utilize MDI to empower oral health providers to vaccinate within their practice.

Implications

- A model with medical-dental integration could inspire a more united front in favor of vaccinations in general and instill a culture of promotion and acceptance within the communities that they serve.
- MDI can inspire policy changes allowing dentists and hygienists to administer vaccines.

Disclosures

- No financial relationships with commercial interests to disclose.

References

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