

Understanding Pneumococcal Vaccine Refusal Among Dialysis Patients:
A Cross-Sectional Study from NKF Malaysia

Azim Hazizuddin Bin Nasaruddin¹, Nor Zakiyah Binti Abdul Razak

¹Head of Medical Department, National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Malaysia

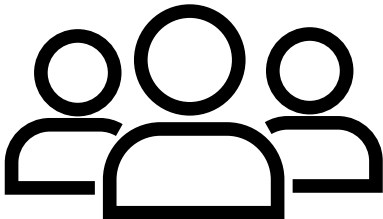
ABSTRACT

Haemodialysis (HD) patients are among the most immunocompromised groups, placing them at high risk of pneumococcal infections. Despite strong recommendations from the Malaysian Ministry of Health and KDIGO, vaccine uptake among these patients remains suboptimal. To address this gap, the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Malaysia introduced a free pneumococcal vaccination program in 2024, offering PCV13 followed by PPSV23 across its dialysis centres. Of 1,366 patients who received the initial PCV13 dose, only 79.6% completed the full course. Vaccine refusal persists, particularly among underprivileged groups, underscoring the urgent need to understand the underlying barriers in order to improve patient outcomes.

METHODS



Cross-sectional survey across 32 dialysis centres.



649 responses



Multilingual questionnaire:

- Malay
- English
- Mandarin
- Tamil

- Assessed:
 - Demographics

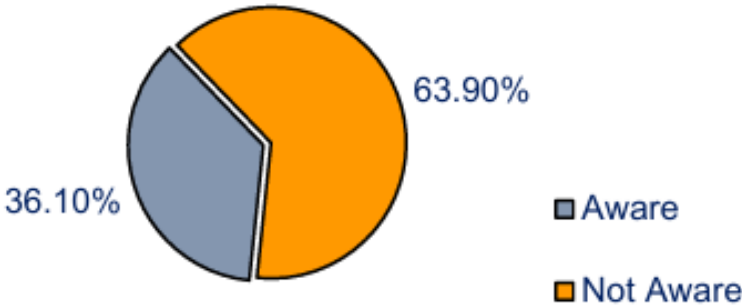


- Awareness
- Refusal reasons
- Trusted sources
- Concerns

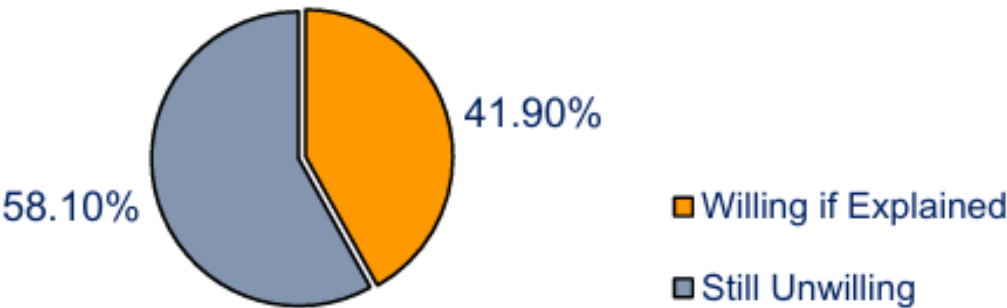


RESULTS

Awareness of Pneumococcal Vaccine



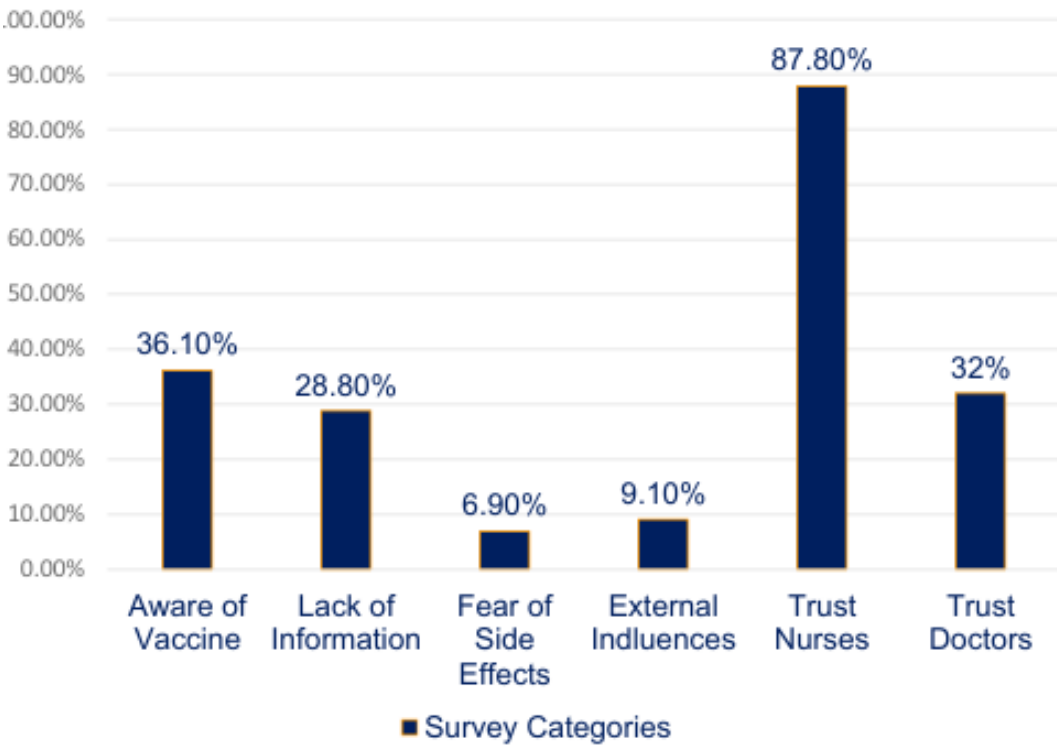
Willingness to Accept Vaccine



Trusted Source



Survey Results on Pneumococcal Vaccine Awareness and Refusal Reasons



CONCLUSIONS

Refusal of pneumococcal vaccination among Malaysian dialysis patients is multifactorial, driven primarily by low awareness, fear of adverse effects, and misinformation. Addressing these barriers through culturally sensitive, nurse-led education and consistent engagement by healthcare providers may enhance trust and vaccine uptake. Understanding these refusal patterns is crucial to improving public health outcomes and shaping inclusive, patient-centred immunisation strategies, especially for underserved populations.

REFERENCES

1. Hooi LS and Ong LM (Eds). 2025. Thirty-first Report of the Malaysian Dialysis and Transplant 2023, Kuala Lumpur.

2. Ministry of Health Malaysia. 2018. National Action Plan for Healthy Kidneys (ACT-KID) 2018-2025