VARICELLA BURDEN DISEASE IN ARGENTINA: 4 YEARS AFTER NATIONAL VACCINATION STRATEGY

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BACKGROUND

In Argentina, around 150,000-180,000 total Varicella (VZV) cases per year (c/y) are registered; however, underreport exists and some 400,000 cases are estimated to occur annually. Varicella vaccine (VV) was included in the National Immunization Schedule (NIS) in 2015, with a 1-dose schedule administered at 15 months-of-age. We aimed to describe and to compare the epidemiological situation of VZV infections in Argentina in two periods: pre (2010-2014) and post (2016-2018) vaccine introduction in NIS.

METHODS

Before-and-after study comparing cases and incidence rates (100,000) of varicella reported to the National Health Surveillance System between pre-vaccination period (Pre-VV) and post-vaccination (Post-VV), excluding year of intervention (2015) since it was considered a transition year.

RESULTS

Figure 1. Global incidence rates and national vaccination coverages

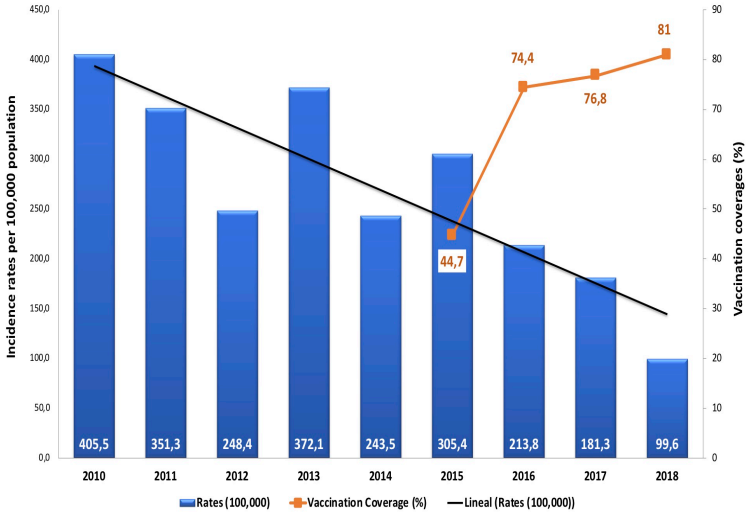


Figure 2. Number of global cases and incidence rates. Pre VV period (2010-2014) and Post VV period (2016-2018)

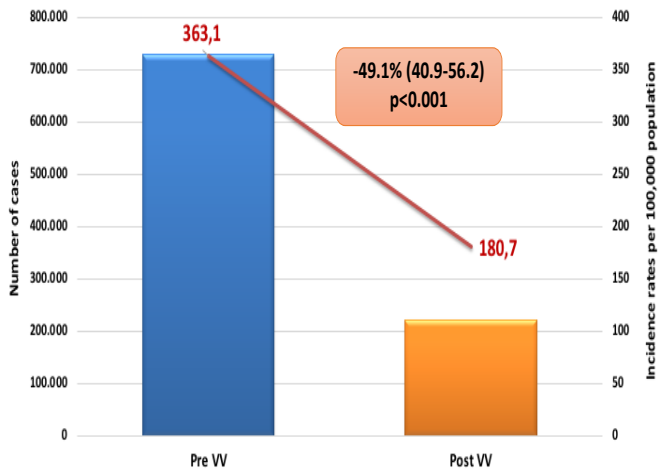
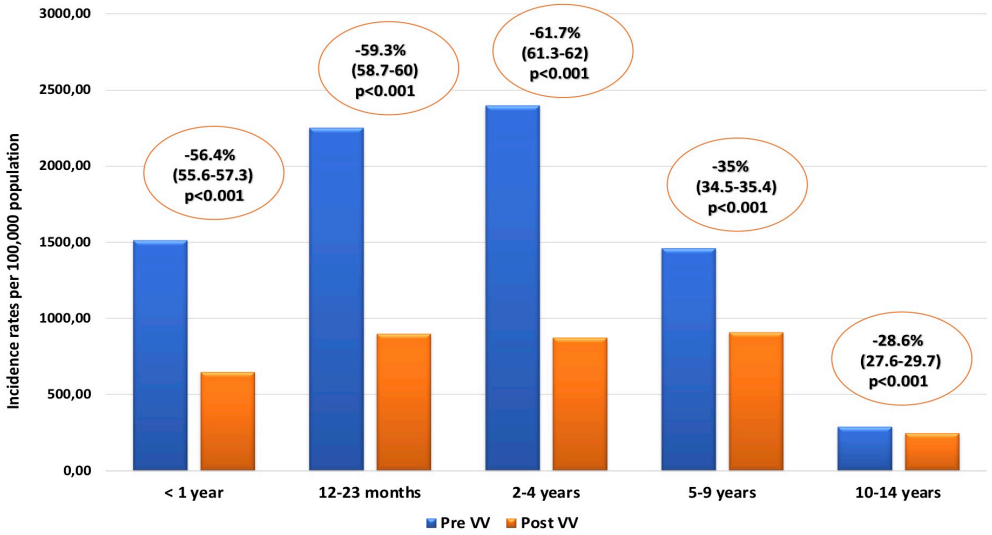


Figure 3. Varicella incidence rates per age groups. Pre VV period (2010-2014) and Post VV period (2016-2018)



CONCLUSIONS:

A decreasing trend in VZV number of cases and incidence rates was observed, especially in children less than 5 years old, despite suboptimal VC. The reduction of VZV cases in non-vaccinated age groups could be related to a decline in the transmission risk. Improving VC will likely reflect a greater impact on the burden of disease.