

Additional file 1: CODEBOOK

1. Article characteristics

1.1 Type of article:

- Editorials (opinion article or press release): any story that offers a first person opinion or is a stated opinion of the newspaper.
- General news (news article): any story that emphasize facts of a recent event.

1.2 Theme of the article (cross the best one with a X):

*Most stories are complex and therefore involve more than one theme; you need to decide which theme is most prominent. The questions to answer are: what is the story really about? What is the **main point** of the story? Focus on why this story is in the paper at all.*

- A. Disease description (general description of meningitidis, epidemiology, symptoms, prevention)
- B. Vaccination (description of anti-meningococcal vaccine, how to access the vaccination service, costs, waiting time)
- C. Policy (communication by health institution on prevention and surveillance procedures)
- D. Meningitidis case reporting (news of meningitis' case, death or disease's course)
- E. Other (the article can not be categorized in previous themes and meningitis is not the main topic)

1.3 Primary/dominant intent of the message (write it using three keywords):

1.4 New information (the article adds something new to information, regarding meningitis or meningococcal vaccine, contained in previous articles):

- Yes
- No

1.5 Presence of at least one mention of institutions or literature in the entire article:

- Yes
- No

1.6 Health information regarding meningitis or meningococcal vaccine are provided by health professionals (doctors, nurses, etc):

- Yes
- No

2. Information about meningococcal disease (included cases)

2.1 Case description is clear and complete:

Description clear and complete means it contains both the following information: geographical location and responsible bacteria.

Remember to note the following information:

- *Geographical location: B=brescia, L=lombardia, I=italy*
- *Responsible bacteria: M=meningococcus, P=pneumococcus, O=other*

- Yes
- No

2.2 Article contains information about signs and symptoms of meningitis:

The article contains at least 2 of the following signs and symptoms: headache; altered mental status; fever; neck stiffness.

- Yes
- No

2.3 Article contains information about long-term effects of meningitis:

- Yes
- No

2.4 Article contains information about preventive recommendations:

- Yes
- No

3. Information about meningococcal vaccine

3.1 Article contains information about different types of available vaccines:

- Yes
- No

3.2 Article contains information about which subjects can access to free or copayment vaccine and/or regarding vaccine's cost:

- Yes
- No

3.3 Article contains information about risks and/or benefits of meningococcal vaccine:

Remember to note down if the article talks just about benefits (b) , just about risks (r) or both (br):

-
- Yes
 - No

3.4 Article contains vaccination centre contact details (at least phone number, address or e-mail address):

- Yes

- No

4. Local Health Authorities activities

4.1 Article contains links to institutional sources, institutional websites or quote to institutional sources:

- Yes
- No

4.2 Article describes Local Health Authorities interventions or actions to manage meningococcal disease incident cases:

- Yes
- No

5. Accuracy of information

5.1 Article contains not correct information:

- Inaccurate information (presence of mistakes)
- Misinformation (sources are not used in a correct manner and incorrect conclusions according to scientific evidence are present)
- No

6. Tone of the message

6.1 The tone of the message is:

- “neutral” (information are unbiased and without any sort of emphasis)
- “alarmist” (there is an excessive apprehension about meningitis and/or an emphasis of facts, e.g. using words as “anxiety”, “scare”, “panic” or “drama” both in the title and in the text)
- ”reassuring” (the aim is to avoid panic so there are sentences as “there is no emergence” , “there is no epidemic”, “The situation is not different from previous years”)