

Adverse Events Following Immunization with Novel Oral Polio Vaccine Type 2, and the Experience and Challenges of Reporting in Sierra Leone [Response to Letter]

Fawzi Thomas ^{1,2}, Onome T Abiri ^{2,3}, Joyce M Kallon⁴, Desmond Maada Kangbai ⁴, Thomas A Conteh^{1,2}, Sally-Mattu Conteh⁴, Edna G Samuels⁴, Olufunsho Awodele⁵

¹Department of Pharmaceutics, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, Sierra Leone; ²Department of Pharmacovigilance and Clinical Trials, Pharmacy Board of Sierra Leone, Freetown, Sierra Leone; ³Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, Sierra Leone; ⁴Expanded Program on Immunization, Freetown, Sierra Leone; ⁵Department of Pharmacology, Therapeutics and Toxicology, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria

Correspondence: Fawzi Thomas, Department of Pharmaceutics, College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, Sierra Leone, Tel +23279460264, Email thomasfawzi5@gmail.com

Dear editor

Thank you for your valuable feedback and your interest in our research titled “Adverse Events Following Immunization With Novel Oral Polio Vaccine Type 2, and the Experience and Challenges of Reporting in Sierra Leone”.¹

We are pleased that you found the description of the cVDPV2 outbreak and the mixed-method approach to vaccine implementation comprehensive. Indeed, the study tried to provide a detailed understanding of how the outbreak unfolded and the subsequent vaccination efforts in Sierra Leone. The challenges faced by the vaccine implementers, particularly in overcoming logistical and social barriers, were critical to the findings.

You have raised an important point about the need for more in-depth analysis from a medical perspective regarding AEFI. We recognize the significance of providing a more robust exploration of adverse events. In response to your suggestion, we will look to expand the medical context in future follow-up studies, offering hypotheses on the nature of AEFI while maintaining a focus on data and field findings. It may include a more detailed examination of potential AEFI cases, their clinical presentations, and any patterns that emerged during the study whilst engaging with healthcare professionals to generate medically grounded hypotheses that can contribute to a more precise understanding of these events.

You also suggested to include focus group discussions with vaccinators and this is very well noted. Such an approach could provide invaluable insights into the perceptions and experiences of those directly involved in the vaccination process.

Perhaps in future studies, we will consider incorporating this qualitative method to better capture the nuanced challenges faced by vaccinators, as well as their direct interactions with the public as this will help in creating a more comprehensive picture of client perspectives and attitudes toward vaccination.

We also agree that offering narratives on AEFI is essential in addressing public concerns about vaccine safety. One of the aims of our research was to clarify the lack of a causal relationship between vaccination and adverse events.

However, your feedback emphasizes the need to more explicitly communicate these findings to reinforce public confidence in vaccination programs. As a result, we will ensure that future work includes a more detailed narrative that highlights this.

We look forward to incorporating these suggestions into future research endeavors and improving the clarity and scope of our work.

Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

Reference

1. Thomas F, Abiri OT, Kallon JM, et al. Adverse events following immunization with novel oral polio vaccine type 2, and the experience and challenges of reporting in Sierra Leone. *Drug Healthc Pat Saf*. 2024;16:61–73. doi:10.2147/DHPS.S466039

Dove Medical Press encourages responsible, free and frank academic debate. The content of the Drug, Healthcare and Patient Safety 'letters to the editor' section does not necessarily represent the views of Dove Medical Press, its officers, agents, employees, related entities or the Drug, Healthcare and Patient Safety editors. While all reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the content of each letter, Dove Medical Press accepts no liability in respect of the content of any letter, nor is it responsible for the content and accuracy of any letter to the editor.

Drug, Healthcare and Patient Safety

Dovepress

Publish your work in this journal

Drug, Healthcare and Patient Safety is an international, peer-reviewed open-access journal exploring patient safety issues in the healthcare continuum from diagnostic and screening interventions through to treatment, drug therapy and surgery. The journal is characterized by the rapid reporting of reviews, original research, clinical, epidemiological and post-marketing surveillance studies, risk management, health literacy and educational programs across all areas of healthcare delivery. The manuscript management system is completely online and includes a very quick and fair peer-review system. Visit <http://www.dovepress.com/testimonials.php> to read real quotes from published authors.

Submit your manuscript here: <https://www.dovepress.com/drug-healthcare-and-patient-safety-journal>

<https://doi.org/10.2147/DHPS.S496511>