



THE DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, BIOSTATISTICS AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, - SEMINAR SERIES IS A SELF-APPROVED GROUP LEARNING ACTIVITY (SECTION 1) AS DEFINED BY THE MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF CANADA

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Methodological Challenges of Studying Perinatal Outcomes Following Immunization During Pregnancy: A Case Study on Influenza

MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2019 / 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

McIntyre Medical Building

3655 promenade Sir William Osler – Meakins Rm 521

ALL ARE WELCOME

ABSTRACT:

Many public health agencies around the world have implemented policies recommending that all pregnant women receive influenza immunization. In addition to preventing maternal influenza disease during pregnancy, transfer of maternal anti-influenza antibodies across the placenta has been shown to protect neonates from influenza disease in early life when they are ineligible for influenza vaccination. Observational studies have played an important role in the ongoing assessment of safety and effectiveness of maternal influenza immunization, yet they have also posed methodological challenges, many of which were recently the focus of an international WHO Taskforce. The objective of this presentation is to discuss challenges for observational studies of birth outcomes following immunization during pregnancy, using influenza vaccine as a case study.

OBJECTIVES

1. Review controversies arising from observational research on maternal influenza immunization and birth outcomes and their relevance to global health policy;
2. Describe the limitations of observational studies on maternal influenza immunization and birth outcomes, highlighting time-related biases and confounding bias;
3. Discuss plausibility of findings from observational research on maternal influenza immunization and birth outcomes.

BIO:

Dr. Deshayne Fell is a perinatal epidemiologist, appointed as an Assistant Professor in the School of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University of Ottawa, as a Scientist in the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute and as an Adjunct Scientist at ICES. Her research uses large, linked population databases and registries to improve our understanding of factors affecting maternal and infant population health. Her current focus includes influenza and pertussis immunization during pregnancy and their relationship with birth outcomes and longer-term pediatric health outcomes; safety and effectiveness of maternal immunization; and epidemiological research methods. Over the past 4 years, she has been a member of two WHO Technical Advisory Groups related to maternal immunization.