FACTORS INFLUENCING HEALTHCARE UTILIZATION AMONG CHILDREN WITH PNEUMONIA IN MUNTINLUPA CITY, THE PHILIPPINES

Soon Ae Kim¹, Maria Rosario Z Capeding² and Paul E Kilgore¹,³

¹Division of Translational Research, International Vaccine Institute, Seoul, Republic of Korea; ²Research Institute for Tropical Medicine, Muntinlupa City, Philippines; ³Department of Pharmacy Practice, Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

Abstract. We evaluated the factors influencing healthcare utilization among children aged <5 years with pneumonia symptoms in Muntinlupa City, the Philippines. We interviewed 1,330 caregivers from 190 households per district in seven districts from March to April, 2009 using a standardized questionnaire to obtain information about demographic characteristics, access to healthcare facilities, and potential barriers to healthcare utilization. The mean age of the children was 32 months; 54.7% were boys. Seventy-four point three percents (n=972) of caregivers stated when their child had pneumonia symptoms they brought them to a government health center, 14.1% (n=184) went to a private clinic, 8.0% (n=104) went to a hospital, 3% (n=40) were treated at home and 0.5% (n=7) received traditional medicine from a local healer. Caregivers required an average of 12 minutes to reach a healthcare facility. Reasons given by caregivers for their choice of healthcare facility were low cost (47.5%), availability and accessibility to transportation (29.6%) and perceived good quality of care (16.5%). In conclusion, nearly three quarters of caregivers interviewed brought their child with pneumonia symptoms to a government health center for treatment. Cost was the main factor influencing choice, followed by transportation availability and quality of care.

Keywords: healthcare utilization, pneumonia, surveillance, Philippines