Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Discuss the role of adolescent HPV vaccination in reducing the burden of cervical cancer in India. Examine the importance of universal access, public awareness and continued screening in achieving this objective.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 21/11/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

HPV and cervical cancer, preventive vaccination, adolescent immunisation, gender equity, public healthcare delivery, parental consent, vaccine safety monitoring, U-WIN digital platform, screening and early detection, awareness and misinformation.

Model Answer

Introduction

Cervical cancer is a major public health concern among women in India. Persistent infection with high-risk Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is its primary cause, making vaccination an important preventive intervention.

Role of HPV Vaccination

- HPV vaccination before exposure to the virus significantly reduces the risk of infection by targeted high-risk HPV types.
- India's initiative to provide free, voluntary vaccination to 14-year-old girls improves affordability and access.
- Digital tracking through the U-WIN platform can strengthen beneficiary identification, coverage monitoring and follow-up.
- Safety monitoring and parental consent help build public confidence in the programme.

Key Implementation Priorities

1. **Equitable access:** Ensure availability in rural, tribal and underserved communities through government health facilities and outreach.
2. **Awareness:** Address misinformation through schools, healthcare workers and community engagement.
3. **Safety and accountability:** Maintain transparent adverse-event monitoring and effective communication with parents.
4. **Health-system integration:** Link vaccination with adolescent health services and reproductive health education.

Why Screening Must Continue

Vaccines do not cover every cancer-causing HPV type and cannot treat existing infections. Therefore, cervical screening, timely diagnosis and access to treatment remain essential.

Conclusion

High vaccination coverage can substantially reduce future cervical cancer incidence. However, vaccination must form part of a comprehensive strategy combining equitable healthcare access, awareness, screening and early treatment.

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