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## From Cervical Cancers to Oropharyngeal: HPV Research in Rural Communities

**Alexandria, VA, USA** – Shillpa Naavaal, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, presented “From Cervical Cancers to Oropharyngeal: HPV Research in Rural Communities” at the hybrid 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting & Exhibition of the AADOCR, held in conjunction with the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research (CADR), online and onsite in Atlanta, GA, on March 21-26, 2022.

This research examined parents’ knowledge about HPV and the HPV vaccine in the context of cancers and explored their perceptions about dental providers’ role in HPV vaccination in rural communities with low HPV vaccine uptake.

Parents of children ages nine to 17-years-old from three rural counties in Virginia participated in a HPV vaccine survey study (n=300). HPV-related cancer knowledge was measured using the following statements:

- 1.) HPV can cause some types of cancers
- 2.) HPV vaccines offer protection against most cervical cancers and against most oropharyngeal cancers

Perceptions about the role of dental providers in HPV vaccination were assessed and participants were asked if they were: 1.) comfortable discussing, 2.) getting a recommendation for, and 3.) receiving HPV vaccination from a dental provider.

The researchers discovered knowledge gaps about the relationship between HPV, the HPV vaccine, and oropharyngeal cancers. They also found that 60% of parents approve of dental providers’ role in HPV vaccination. Therefore, effective communication and messaging through dental providers can build awareness about HPV, its relationship with oropharyngeal cancers, and the importance of the HPV vaccine for cancer prevention in rural communities.

This research was presented as a virtual Interactive Talk on March 24, 2022 at 8 a.m. EDT, [view the abstract](#) on the 2022 Annual Meeting Hybrid Platform.

### About AADOCR

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) is a nonprofit organization with over 3,000 members in the United States with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being. AADOCR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental Research which has over 10,000 members. Learn more at [www.aadocr.org](http://www.aadocr.org).