

UNDERSTANDING COVID-19 VACCINE EFFECTIVENESS IN PREVENTING SEVERE DISEASE

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DOI: 10.5937/BatutPHCO24012K

Understanding COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness (VE) in preventing severe disease is critical to inform vaccine policy. In this talk I will describe the results of a study that used the test-negative design to estimate VE against SARS-CoV-2-confirmed hospitalisation in adults ≥ 18 years in the eastern part of the WHO European region. We included patients hospitalised for severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) at sentinel surveillance sites in six countries and areas, including in Serbia. We collected demographic information, COVID-19 vaccination history, and tested respiratory samples for SARS-CoV-2 by RT-PCR. We calculated VE of any vaccine dose received within 12 months (Annual VE) as $[(1 - \text{adjusted Odds Ratio}) \times 100\%]$ using a one-stage pooled analysis. The reference group included unvaccinated individuals and those who received their last vaccine > 12 months before symptom onset. Results of this study will be presented in the context of vaccine effectiveness estimates in other countries in other regions of the world, and in the context of current recommendations for COVID-19 vaccination.