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Emerging vaccine-preventable diseases: Are we ready for the next outbreak

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As vaccination coverage fluctuates globally, pediatricians face renewed threats from diseases once considered under control such as measles, pertussis, and polio. Sofia Mendes from Lisbon presents a comprehensive review of emerging vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) and preparedness strategies. She analyses the impact of vaccine hesitancy, disrupted immunization schedules, and migratory patterns on disease resurgence. The session includes updates on the latest vaccine developments (e.g., dengue, RSV, meningococcal B), catch-up protocols, and regional outbreak containment

strategies. Attendees will gain insights into recognizing early outbreak signs, communicating vaccine safety effectively to caregivers, and working with public health systems to close immunity gaps.

Biography

Sofia Mendes is a paediatrician and immunization advocate based in Lisbon, Portugal. She earned her MD from the University of Porto and trained in global health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. Mendes is a regional coordinator for the European Vaccine Initiative and regularly consults with ECDC on childhood immunization coverage.