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CONSUMER WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR A HYPOTHETICAL ZIKA VACCINE IN BRAZIL

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Introduction: Zika virus is a newly emerging infection associated with increasingly large outbreaks especially in countries such as Brazil where an estimated 326,224 cases were confirmed between 2015 and 2018. Common symptoms associated with Zika include headache, conjunctivitis, fever, erythema, myalgia, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. However, the symptoms are usually self-limiting and last on average for 4 to 7 days, with patients typically not accessing the public healthcare system (SUS). In severe cases, symptoms include neurological disorders and neonatal malformations. A future Zika vaccine can contribute to decreasing the number of cases and associated complications. However, this has to be balanced against continuing costs to control this and other vector borne diseases. Consequently, information about consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) for a hypothetical Zika vaccine can help with price setting discussions in Brazil starting with the private market before being considered within SUS. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among residents in one of the main provinces of Brazil (Minas Gerais) regarding their WTP for a hypothetical Zika Vaccine with agreed characteristics. This included a mean effective protection of 80%, with the possibility of some local and systemic side-effects. The discussed price was US\$ 56.41(180.00 BRL) per vaccination as this figure was utilized in a previous WTP study for a dengue vaccine. **Results:** 517 people were interviewed. However, 30 would not be vaccinated even if the vaccine was free. Most of the resultant interviewees (489) were female (58.2%), were employed (71.2%), had private health insurance (52.7%), had household incomes above twice the minimum wage (69.8%) and did not have Zika (96.9%). The median individual maximum WTP for this hypothetical Zika vaccine was US\$31.34 (BRL100.00). **Conclusion:** WTP research can contribute to decision-making about possible prices alongside other economic criteria once a Zika vaccine becomes available in Brazil alongside other programmes to control the virus.

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