

News

Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles

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Re: Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles

26 January 2012

Jackie Fletcher's letter highlights an important area of concern, the failure of the government and medical profession to address the possibility of vaccine damage at a clinical level while retreating behind an unconvincing body of epidemiology [1]. Even the best conducted epidemiology might mask damage to significant sub-groups as pointed out by for National Institutes of Health director, the late Bernardine Healy on CBS news [2]. And clearly anyone who questions public policy is still at risk of reaping political consequences.

BMJ readers who may be left perplexed from Clare Dyer's report [3] at what on earth all this is about may be referred to the an article by Eugenie Samuel Reich in Nature News[4] the statement in BMJ of Dr Dhillon [5] and evidence cited by John R Smith in BMJ Rapid Responses from the GMC hearing against Andrew Wakefield and Profs Walker-Smith and Murch [6,7].

[1] John Stone, 'Re: Evidence is not bullying' BMJ Rapid Responses 18 September 2009 <http://www.bmj.com/rapid-response/2011/11/02/re-evidence-not-bullying>

[2] CBS News 'Healy on the Vaccine-Autism link', May 12, 2008
<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4088138n>

[3] Clare Dyer, 'Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles'
<http://www.bmj.com/content/344/bmj.e310>

[4] Eugenie Samuel Reich, 'Fresh dispute over MMR 'fraud'', Nature News 9 November 2011, <http://www.nature.com/news/2011/111109/full/479157a.html>

[5] Amar P Dhillon, 'Re: Pathology reports solve “new bowel disease” riddle', BMJ Rapid Responses 17 November 2011, <http://www.bmj.com/rapid-response/2011/11/17/re-pathology-reports-solve-...>

[6] John R Smith 'Re: Pathology reports solve “new bowel disease” riddle', BMJ Rapid Response 20 November 2011 <http://www.bmj.com/rapid-response/2011/11/20/re-pathology-reports-solve-...>

[7] John R Smith 'GMC Transcripts solve Riddle of new bowel disease', BMJ Rapid Responses <http://www.bmj.com/rapid-response/2011/11/25/re-pathology-reports-solve-...>

Competing interests: Autistic son

John Stone, UK Editor

AgeofAutism.com, London N22

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26 January 2012

I must admit to being perplexed by Ms. Fletcher's comment. She points out the problems reported with the Urabe strain MMR vaccine and questions why Mr. Deer did not pursue this line of journalistic research.

I am perplexed because Mr. Wakefield has publicly discussed multiple times that he and Richard Barr, not Mr. Deer, were entrusted with information about the Urabe mumps strain containing MMR vaccines. Mr. Wakefield has described a meeting in 1999 where he was told of those problems[1].

I have been unable to find any public mention by Mr. Wakefield of the concerns about MMR vaccine with the Urabe mumps strain until the past few years[1].

I am perplexed. I am perplexed why Mr. Wakefield appears to have not acted on the information given him. I am perplexed why he and his supporters feel this story supports his actions in promoting the now failed measles virus theory.

Were I a parent who suspected vaccine injury in my child from the Urabe strain containing MMR, I would be more than angry that the information given to Mr. Wakefield and Mr. Barr appears to have been shelved while another theory was pursued.

[1] <http://briandeer.com/solved/whistleblower-betrayed.htm>

Competing interests: Father of an autistic child
Matthew Carey, physicist
none, San Jose, California, USA

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-52 votes

Re: Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles **25 January 2012**

I just wish Mr Deer had used his considerable talents to hound the committee responsible for introducing a vaccine, brands of which had already been withdrawn in other countries for causing neurological problems. I wish Mr Deer had used his time and energy to expose the people responsible for allowing the continued use of MMR vaccines when children were reported to have suffered problems in the opening weeks of the MMR campaign back in 1988. I wish he had used his efforts to expose the inadequacies of the Government's yellow card scheme which has been ineffective since it began. Mr Deer was informed of this but investigated the one team of doctors who had raised a flag over the MMR and possible side effects. I would like to remind/inform your readers that the problems with MMR were known about by the UK Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation at least eight months before they sanctioned its use in the UK. (1) This was way back in 1988, ten years before The Lancet case series early report was published.

From the minutes of the JCVI Working Party On The Introduction of Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine (11 February 1988):

'...5. MMR Vaccination In Canada

Members read a report of cases of mumps encephalitis which had been associated with MMR vaccine containing the URABE strain of the mumps virus. The

Canadian authorities has suspended the licences of MMR vaccines containing the URABE strain but Dr Salisbury considered that the data on which the decision had been based was slender. It was agreed that North Hertfordshire would use the Jeryl-Lyn vaccine, if it was available from MSD, to obtain comparative data. A statement would be prepared in anticipation of any adverse publicity which might arise.'

The Government clearly were aware of the risks involved with the URABE containing vaccines (Pluserix and Immravax) before it was introduced and had the audacity to prepare an adverse publicity statement in readiness for what was potentially to come.

Problems with MMR vaccine began in the opening weeks/months of the new campaign starting in October 1988 as subsequently reported in the UK Daily Mail: 'MMR killed my daughter' 18th May 2004 (2) and the Sunday Express: 'Were all of these children killed by the triple MMR jab?' by Lucy Johnston 13/1/02 (3)

In October 1997, four months before The Lancet publication, a meeting was held with the Health Minister and the Chief Medical Officer, Principal Medical Officer and other senior officers. The Health Minister was presented with details of some 1200 children and asked to instigate a clinical investigation into their ill health or death following MMR or MR vaccinations. This was never done. Most of the children had started with symptoms within the incubation period of the vaccines; symptoms that were recognised by the vaccine manufacturers and then they developed long term problems also recognised by the vaccine manufacturers within their product information sheets. The parents had reported that no treating physician had been able to determine any alternative medical explanation for the child's decline. Much money, time and effort has been spent on not studying these children. I think that those accusing Dr Wakefield should look long and hard at their own role in protecting government officials who indemnified vaccine manufacturers against any action for serious damage and deaths of children.

(1) JCVI minutes of meeting February 1988

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@ab/docu...

(2) <http://www.jabs.org.uk/pages/home/home.html>

(3) <http://www.jabs.org.uk/pages/johnston-mmr.asp>

JABS is a UK support group for parents of vaccine damaged children.

Competing interests: Mother of MMR vaccine damaged child

Jackie Fletcher, National Coordinator

JABS, Warrington UK

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156 votes

Re: Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles

24 January 2012

I must admit that Mr. Wakefield is a bit of an enigma to me. This lawsuit is a prime example. I just do not understand his priorities.

Mr. Wakefield was sanctioned by the General Medical Council after, amongst many charges found proved, he was found guilty of serious professional misconduct. His actions were "contrary to the clinical interests" of some of the disabled children involved in his research.

These statements he let stand without challenge. But claims that his research was fraudulent are worth a lawsuit?

The GMC did address the 1998 Lancet article, finding Mr. Wakefield guilty of "dishonesty in regard to his writing of a scientific paper that had major implications for public health" amongst other findings:

"The Panel made findings of transgressions in many aspects of Dr Wakefield's research. It made findings of dishonesty in regard to his writing of a scientific paper that had major implications for public health, and with regard to his subsequent representations to a scientific body and to colleagues. He was dishonest in respect of the LAB funds secured for research as well as being misleading. Furthermore he was in breach of his duty to manage finances as well as to account for funds that he did not need to the donor of those funds. In causing blood samples to be taken from children at a birthday party, he callously disregarded the pain and distress young children might suffer and behaved in a way which brought the profession into disrepute."

Again worth noting: this was left to stand unchallenged.

As the parent of an autistic child and as a researcher (albeit in a non medical field) my opinion is that Mr. Wakefield's actions have caused a great deal of harm to the

autism communities. I was grateful to the BMJ for making it clear the depth of problems involved with his work.

Competing interests: parent of an autistic child

Matthew Carey

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Re: Wakefield sues BMJ over MMR articles

13 January 2012

Congratulations! It's always important that any reputable publication is sued every so often to show that it's doing its job properly. Can't see how Wakefield, voted one of the worst 10 doctors of 2011 by Medscape, thinks that he'll win! Keep it up!

Competing interests: None declared

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