

Immunisation

Madam, - Hands up anyone who had a Scarlet Fever vaccine? That's correct - we never had one.

Since whooping cough vaccination started in New Zealand, statistics prove the disease incidence has grown from strength to strength, with ever increasing rates of hospitalisations, especially in the under ones. Neither did the vaccine have anything to do with the decline in deaths. Why is it that we never hear this, since it is in the literature for all to see?

Like most areas in this country, your area is highly vaccinated, and all the cases are fully vaccinated, so why blame unvaccinated children? Dr. Williams quotes the vaccine as being 70 per cent effective, whereas the only trial done with the vaccine we use, in a country with circulating whooping cough, found an effectiveness of 28 per cent.

Last year, nearly 20 per cent of all kiwi babies and children with whooping cough had four vaccines, 70 per cent of the total had had three shots, and only 13 per cent had had none. As far as I know, those figures haven't changed.

Holland, America and Finland have 97 per cent vaccination rates and huge uncontrollable whooping cough epidemics in 1997. In 1998, Idaho with a 66 per cent vaccination rate, had a large epidemic which when investigated by the CDC, showed one case in an unvaccinated child. The CDC immediately implemented a huge advertising campaign telling parents that if they vaccinated now, their children wouldn't catch it. How strange.

Australian figures show their 90 per cent nationwide vaccination rate for whooping cough has done nothing to reduce the huge numbers in their whooping cough epidemic which has raged since 1993. All deaths have been in babies (unprotected by their infected, fully vaccinated peers and siblings) too young to complete the schedule.

The year our two boys got whooping cough, they were "number 70 and 71" in our doctor's practice, two of only three unvaccinated children to be infected by their fully vaccinated peers. They were also the only two children in the practice who were not prescribed antibiotics. When I asked the doctor why, he said that most of the other children didn't need antibiotics either, but their parents thought they did, and demanded them. Why?

Because vaccination is only one of many sacred cows about which the public desperately needs to be told the whole truth and nothing but.

Hilary Butler
Spokesperson Immunisation
Awareness Society