

Autism Society of Boulder County



Promoting Education & Awareness

A CHARITABLE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION * EIN 20-0574440

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To: Interested Parties

Re: CAAP, CFP, CCIC & TCH Memo of 11/23 - Thimerosal & Autism Fact Sheet

We write to you today regarding the above referenced memo and to offer information regarding our concerns and to thank stakeholders attending the December 2nd meeting at CHI regarding restoring confidence to Colorado's Immunization Program.

Our organization is very concerned about research indicating the potential harm of thimerosal containing vaccines. In following the format of the meeting of December 2nd, we did not present the science supporting our concerns as it would have been counterproductive to pursuing goals relevant to public perception on the matter. However, as stated by Ms. Lehman of Autism Society of Colorado during the December 2nd meeting, the science supporting these concerns are made by equally and highly credentialed researchers.

Furthermore, Autism Society of Boulder County (ASBC) agrees with Dr. Thomas Verstraeten, primary author of the 2004 IOM Immunization Safety Review: Vaccines and Autism report, who stated with regard to thimerosal and autism in an April 2004 letter to *Pediatrics*, that his study **“does not state that we found evidence against an association, as a negative study would. It does state, on the contrary, that additional study is recommended, which is the conclusion to which a neutral study must come.”** Consequently, ASBC supports the accepted concept of “first do no harm” and the use of thimerosal free/trace amount vaccines until research recommended by the US Committee on Government Reform on the subject of thimerosal's safety and/or association between exposure and autism are conducted, as well as opening the Vaccine Safety Database (VSD) to independent researchers. Below are additional salient points we would offer for your consideration and in response to statements in the above referenced memo regarding thimerosal's safety and public perception.

[US Committee on Government Reform findings after review of federal agency and independent research \(partial list – see Congressional Record 5/2003\)](#)

- Thimerosal is hazardous to humans and undesirable in medicinal uses and should be minimized or eliminated entirely in favor of existing thimerosal free (trace amount) versions;
- The FDA and vaccine manufacturers have never conducted adequate testing on Thimerosal;
- FDA and CDC failed in their duty to be vigilant of cumulative amounts of thimerosal that children were being exposed to via the childhood immunization schedule. This lack of vigilance exposed children in the 1990's at up to 125 times over EPA guidelines;
- Conflicts of interest between the vaccine industry and CDC (i.e. individuals conducting the studies worked or received money from industry or had vaccines patents/vested interest in vaccines), as well as the National Immunization Program, existed that precluded objective monitoring of vaccine safety.
- CDC & Institutes of Medicine (IOM) studies on a causality link between Thimerosal Containing Vaccines and Autism were flawed or underpowered. (Finding previous to IOM 2004 – see Verstraeten comments on 2004 report above)

IOM Review of the National Immunization Program's Research Procedures & Data Sharing Program (2/2005):

- Recommended CDC's Vaccine Safety Database (VSD) be opened to independent researchers to restore eroding public trust; (Page 19)
- Noted that access and results based on VSD are tied to credibility and trust in the National Immunization Program (NIP); (Page 20)
- Noted that addressing the public's lingering concerns and beliefs about immunization decisions as crucial for maintaining and improving immunization coverage in the United States; (Page 22)

Independent research on thimerosal has demonstrated (partial list):

- Thimerosal has been found to be far more hazardous than previously believed by medical professionals. Over twice as much thimerosal was trapped in the brains of infant monkeys, than was previously believed possible confirming that the blood brain barrier is breached and neurological damage probable. (National Institute of Health funded study conducted by Washington State University, Burbacher & Clarkson - April 2005)
- Thimerosal dosing of mice, duplicating exposure equal to the 1990's immunization schedule, demonstrated that autistic symptoms could be duplicated via overexposure to thimerosal demonstrating possible causal link. (Hornig, Chain and Lipkin of Columbia University, New York - June 2004)
- Thimerosal, among other toxins, inhibited growth factor signaling pathways and affected neurodevelopment. (Deth, etal, Northeastern University, University of Nebraska, Tufts and Johns Hopkins University - February 2004)

Please let us state for the record, our communication with you is not anti-vaccine. With the technological advances made by the immunization industry, thimerosal free/trace vaccines are available and we support action to provide these vaccines to Coloradoans and restore confidence in immunization programs. This issue is community based and affects individuals outside the constituency we represent, as noted in the 2005 IOM report (above) and is focused on effective vaccine safety and monitoring.

Please feel free to contact us with any concerns, or requests for documentation supporting the above notations. It is our hope that we can to work with immunization stakeholders to improve and restore confidence to Colorado's immunization program and believe that participation of all stakeholders is necessary in attaining these goals.

Best Regards,



Theresa K. Wrangham,
President