

Measles

Hilary Butler

Television has made out that the "debate" over whether or not to vaccinate has confused people. Are you confused? If you are, why are you confused?

The real issue at stake when making a decision is not your emotional reaction to the media-hyped war-type language basically saying "If you don't do this, your child will die", but;

WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE?

The New Zealand Health Department? Where are their facts and are they correct? To make a decision you need to know that the advice you are taking is honest. Truthful. So far, in the media, we have been told again and again that there were two deaths in 1985 and three this year (as of 19th July 1991), all of which were totally preventable. We have also been told that this vaccine gives life-long protection and is safe with no side-effects. All this is couched in the language of voice-overs saying "Measles rages amongst unimmunised", "Health Department battles Epidemics" with a somewhat tense, raised pitch to suit the occasion. Amongst all this has come the threats of using the Young Persons and Children's Amendment Act to sue parents whose unvaccinated children might die from measles; compulsory immunisation the suggestion by Waikato Area Health Board for all daycare, kindergartens, playcentres, schools etc. to bar unimmunised contacts; and some quite vituperative unfounded garbage by the likes of the Northern Advocates about people who do not immunise.

We must be aware that in the present climate of media suppression of factual data and Health Department orchestration of both this epidemic, the notification system and the media portrayal, that the situation is likely to get worse, not better.

In order to understand why the situation may get worse, we need to know the real facts, not the pseudo-hype presently glutting the media. The real facts will show us whether or not the New Zealand Health Department has a track record worth listening to.

OPTIONS 14

Deaths in N.Z.

1985 - 2 deaths.

1) child, immunised, non hodgkins lymphoma, on chemotherapy, in remission, died of measles induced giant cell pneumonia.

2) child, unimmunised, with I-cell disease (a mucopolidosis), died of secondary bacterial infection.

Both these children had conditions which altered their immune systems so that they could not deal with the measles virus correctly, thus significantly affecting the outcome. More importantly, while the immunised child was the one that died of measles virus, strictly speaking, the unimmunised child did not. Anyone can get bacterial pneumonia at any time. To call this a measles death might be legitimate in doctors' eyes, but is an example of their one-eyed tunnel vision, because if you vaccinate your child and as a result the child gets a fever and has a febrile convulsion, you will be told that the convulsion was caused by the fever, not the vaccine. And if the convulsions continue and result in neurological problems, you will in all likelihood be told that it wasn't the vaccine, but an

underlying condition which surfaced "coincidentally". We are NEVER told that throughout the world, a very large percentage of measles deaths in developed countries occur in vaccinated or unvaccinated children with underlying conditions already known.

Vaccine gives life-long protection

In 1985 a significant but UNKNOWN percentage of measles cases were vaccinated. I say UNKNOWN because in the medical article published, the rate was only those who could confirm that vaccination had been given - on doctor's records. Some parents were obliquely accused of lying and discounted.

This year the situation is that many Area Health Boards don't know. One Area Health Board (Wellington) has stated that 20% of cases are immunised. Auckland Area Health Board has said all cases are unimmunised. However we know that that is an outright lie, because our phones have been busy with people whose children have come down with



