



November 2013

Position statement from the Centre for Immunisation Research and Vaccinology, Immunisation Advisory Centre, The University of Auckland

RE the article *“Lead Developer of HPV Vaccines Comes Clean, Warns Parents and Young Girls It’s All A Giant Deadly Scam.”* which has recently resurfaced, yet again, on Facebook. This article is largely plagiarised from a 2009 article published in a tabloid newspaper and is currently sourced from feelguide.com, a website which by its own admission contains *“published articles, speculation, assumptions, opinions as well as factual information. Information on this site may or may not be true and is not meant to be taken as fact”*.

Comment from Immunisation Advisory Centre: The claim is that one of the investigators involved in the clinical trials for Gardasil (Dr Diane Harper) has spoken out against the human papillomavirus vaccine Gardasil. This claim has been circulating on the internet for several years. It is not accurate and Diane Harper denied the claims after it was published in 2009 and complained to the Press Council. Since this time many anti immunisation websites have continued to propagate the original article that appeared in the tabloid *Daily Express*. Diane Harper has been critical about how the vaccine was marketed in the United States but not the safety of the vaccine.

Several respected scientists have posted rebuttals to this material with considerable detail over the past few years. The centre for Immunisation Research and Vaccinology at the Immunisation Advisory Centre recommend and support the following commentaries for those who would like further details on this issue. There are also many others available.

Dr Ben Goldacre – British physician, academic and prominent science writer. Dr Goldacre is a Research Fellow in Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He also writes for Science section of The Guardian. He spoke to Dr Harper in 2009 after the Daily Express article. <http://www.theguardian.com/science/2009/oct/10/ben-goldacre-cervical-cancer-jab>

Dr Kristen Harper, an Epidemiologist at Columbia University Medical Centre and freelance science writer <http://sososcience.com/2013/11/13/the-bogus-hpv-vaccine-article-that-just-wont-die/>

Dr David Gorsky is Professor of Surgery at Wayne State University and a surgical oncologist at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute. He is a prolific and animated science writer who has covered recent activity around this myth on more than one occasion. <http://scienceblogs.com/insolence/2013/08/16/yet-another-antivaccine-meme-rises-from-the-grave-again-no-diane-harper-doesnt-hate-gardasil/>

For further information about immunisation contact:
0800IMMUNE (0800 466863) to speak to a nurse specialist

For further information about this statement contact

Dr Helen Petousis-Harris

Director Immunisation Research and Vaccinology, Immunisation Advisory Centre
University of Auckland

h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz