



Elizabeth Hart &lt;eliz.hart25@gmail.com&gt;

## Failure to disclose conflicts of interest / HPV vaccination / Dave Hawkes / Patrick Stokes / Sue Ieraci

Elizabeth Hart &lt;eliz.hart25@gmail.com&gt;

Wed, Apr 12, 2017 at 9:44 PM

To: Tom Jefferson &lt;jefferson.tom@gmail.com&gt;, Peter Gøtzsche &lt;pcg@cochrane.dk&gt;

Cc: Louise.Schouborg.Brinth@regionh.dk, Karsten juhl jørgensen &lt;kj@cochrane.dk&gt;, Margrete Auken &lt;margrete.auken@europarl.europa.eu&gt;, Christopher Exley &lt;c.exley@keele.ac.uk&gt;

Dr Jefferson and Professor Gøtzsche, further to my previous correspondence re HPV vaccination, FYI, please see below my recent email to Mr Misha Ketchell, Managing Editor of the academic website *The Conversation*.

This email is pertinent to HPV vaccination, and also to manipulation of vaccination policy in Australia. I am pursuing this matter further.

Regards

Elizabeth Hart

<https://over-vaccination.net/>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Elizabeth Hart &lt;eliz.hart25@gmail.com&gt;

Date: Wed, Apr 12, 2017 at 5:42 PM

Subject: Failure to disclose conflicts of interest / HPV vaccination / Dave Hawkes / Patrick Stokes / Sue Ieraci

To: Misha Ketchell &lt;misha.ketchell@theconversation.edu.au&gt;

Cc: Peter Charles Doherty &lt;pcd@unimelb.edu.au&gt;, Teresa Rispoli &lt;trispoli@unimelb.edu.au&gt;, lisa.watts@theconversation.edu.au

**Open email to:**Mr Misha Ketchell  
Managing Editor  
*The Conversation*

Mr Ketchell

*The Conversation* claims to be "**an independent source of news and views**", but it has conflicts of interest via its funding from the research community.

*The Conversation* failed to disclose conflict of interest information on the recent article **New study shows HPV vaccine is working to reduce rates of genital warts**, authored by Dr Dave Hawkes, and published on 29 March 2017: <https://theconversation.com/new-study-shows-hpv-vaccine-is-working-to-reduce-rates-of-genital-warts-75129>

Dr Hawkes' article promotes the use of HPV vaccination, specifically the Gardasil HPV vaccine product. However, the following conflicts of interest are not disclosed:

- There is no disclosure that *The Conversation* receives financial support from the University of Queensland which receives royalties from the sales of HPV vaccine products.[1]
- Dr Dave Hawkes' association with the Stop the Australian (Anti-) Vaccination Network is not disclosed. This organisation lobbies for coercive vaccination policy and, as I know from personal experience, its associates aim to shut down public discussion on vaccination policy. According to the Hansard record of the transcript of the Senate public hearing re the No Jab, No Pay Bill 2015[2], Dr Hawkes is an Administrator of the Stop the Australian (Anti-) Vaccination Network. I suggest it is pertinent to disclose that Dr Hawkes is a member of a vaccination lobby group which was provided with a public platform to support the No Jab, No Pay Bill, which has subsequently been enacted as a coercive vaccination law in Australia. While HPV vaccination is not (yet) required by this law, in effect the coercive climate which has arisen in relation to the No Jab, No Pay law means many parents and children will feel pressured to have HPV vaccination (x 3 doses). For example, an article titled **Students skip life saving vaccines**, recently published in *The Advertiser* newspaper, states **"...students should be protected from; the cancer-causing Human papillomavirus HPV..."** This statement infers students will be unequivocally protected from cancer if they have the HPV vaccination. **However, at this stage there is no evidence the still experimental HPV vaccines will prevent cancer.**

**Commentary published in *The Lancet* in 2011 notes: "A demonstrable reduction of the burden of cervical cancer - the main goal of HPV vaccines - will take several decades."**[3]

- Dr Sue Ieraci posted a number of comments on Dr Hawkes' article, in response to Matthew Grant and Marian Vickers. It is problematic that Dr Ieraci has not disclosed her association with Friends of Science in Medicine, another vaccination lobby group which presented at the Senate public hearing re the No Jab, No Pay Bill 2015, supporting this coercive vaccination bill. This is a particularly serious omission in light of Dr Ieraci's privileged position as a 'Reader' on *The Conversation's* Community Council, with the power to censor (i.e. 'hide') comments on *The Conversation*, which is also not disclosed.
- Dr Patrick Stokes also posted a number of comments on Dr Hawkes' article in response to Marian Vickers, including demands that she provide **"relevant qualifications and scientific background"** to justify her questioning of HPV vaccination policy. **Does *The Conversation* support Dr Stokes' implication that citizens are not entitled to question government vaccination policy unless they have "relevant qualifications and scientific background"?** Dr Stokes also fails to disclose his association with a lobby group supporting coercive vaccination - along with Dr Hawkes, he is also reported to be an Administrator with the Stop the Australian (Anti-) Vaccination Network, and presented alongside Dr Hawkes and Dr Ieraci at the Senate public hearing re the No Jab, No Pay Bill in 2015. Also not disclosed is that Dr Stokes is an 'Academic' on *The Conversation's* Community Council and, along with Dr Ieraci, has the power to censor (i.e. 'hide') comments on *The Conversation*.

Mr Ketchell, *The Conversation* published Dr Hawkes' article promoting HPV vaccination, and allowed his colleagues Dr Ieraci and Dr Stokes to 'ride shotgun' on his article, attacking dissenters, without disclosing their association with lobby groups supporting coercive vaccination, and without disclosing their status as members of *The Conversation's* Community Council[4], with the power to censor comments of people they argue against. **Do you think this is ethical?**

**Via its support of Dr Hawkes, Dr Ieraci and Dr Stokes, it appears *The Conversation* provides a platform for associates of coercive vaccination lobby groups. It is problematic that *The Conversation's* support of these groups and its members is not transparent.**

**Mr Ketchell, I request you take steps to amend Dr Hawkes' article and profile to indicate his association with the Stop the Australian (Anti-) Vaccination Network lobby group. Dr Ieraci's association with Friends of Science in Medicine, and Dr Stokes' association with Stop the Australian (Anti-) Vaccination Network should also be noted in their profiles. (This information is pertinent whether their association is current or previous.) It should be made clear that these organisations support coercive vaccination policy and were privileged to present their views at the Senate public hearing re the No Jab, No Pay Bill, this Bill subsequently becoming law in Australia.**

**Dr Ieraci's and Dr Stokes' position on *The Conversation's* Community Council, and their power to censor comments, should also be disclosed in their profiles and on any articles on which they comment. Mr Ketchell, I suggest you and *The Conversation's* Board and Editorial Board need to consider very carefully your position in promoting the interests of the research community, including the uncritical promotion of vaccine products such as the still experimental Gardasil HPV vaccine, particularly as *The Conversation* indirectly benefits from the sale of this product via funding received from the University of Queensland.**

**Your non-disclosure of conflicts of interest, and your stifling of open debate on matters relevant to vaccination policy in Australia, including banning citizens such as myself from participating in 'the conversation', is a threat to citizens' rights in our liberal democracy.**

I request your carefully considered response on this matter.

Sincerely  
Elizabeth Hart  
<https://over-vaccination.net/>

#### References:

1. "The Merck vaccine, Gardasil, was commercially released in 2006. Under the licensing arrangements, milestone and royalty payments from the sale of the Merck and GSK vaccines will be payable to Uniquist and will ultimately flow back to UQ (University of Queensland) and the researchers (Ian Frazer)." Group of Eight. Module 4.
2. Public Hearing Transcript. Official Committee Hansard. Senate. Community Affairs Legislation Committee. Social Services Legislation Amendment (No Jab, No Pay) Bill 2015. Monday 2 November 2015. Brisbane.
3. Mona Saraiya, Susan Hariri (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). HPV vaccine effect: is the glass half full or half empty? *The Lancet*. Vol. 377. June 18, 2011.
4. *The Conversation's* Community Council: <https://theconversation.com/the-conversations-community-council-59673>

