

21 May 2008

## What's Going On in SE London?

**John Stone**

What's going on in SE London? According to a BBC report [1]:

*"Emergency measures are being implemented to halt a measles outbreak.*

*"Health chiefs in London have ordered NHS trusts to offer MMR jabs in quick succession amid a surge in measles.*

*"There have been over 200 cases in south east London in the first five months of this year. It comes after a record 1,000 were recorded nationally in 2007.*

*"The Health Protection Agency said it hoped that offering the two jabs within months instead of two years apart would help stem the rise."*

The next statement is revealing:

*"It is not known exactly what has caused the rise in cases, but take-up of MMR has struggled to recover from being linked to autism in the 1990s."*

So, even the HPA are not able confidently to link the outbreak to a shortfall in MMR uptake. This echoes an earlier BBC report [2].

*"The number of confirmed measles cases has risen from 56 in 1998 in England and Wales to just under 1,000 in 2007, according to provisional data. However, the impact of MMR on these figures is not clear."*

Evidently, there is no clear story about transmission of the disease supporting the case for MMR vaccination. They have not in this case claimed that the illness is hitting the unvaccinated, and indeed are taking the extraordinary step of re-vaccinating those vaccinated as little as a month later.

Information is never presented in a straightforward way. Many who did not have MMR paid voluntarily to have single jabs. It makes no sense to talk about MMR coverage in a population when you need to know the total vaccine coverage including single jabs. And it does not help that the matter is being unpleasantly politicised by the attack on Andrew Wakefield.

Nor is it encouraging to hear the Health Protection Agency disease control expert Donna McInnes spout this hoary old chestnut:

*"Children's immune systems have a huge capacity and overloading them with the vaccination is not an issue. " [1]*

Some years ago I had the remarkable fortune to challenge UK vaccine supremo Dr David Salisbury on this very matter. This is part of how he replied:

*"Turning to my comments on Newsnight - I suggest you read Paul Offit's paper - as I have done. On page 126, he states: "Current data suggest that the theoretical capacity determined by diversity of antibody variable gene regions would allow for as many as 10<sup>9</sup> (1,000,000,000) to 10<sup>11</sup>(100,000,000,000) different antibody specificities". And "... then each infant would have the theoretical capacity to respond to about 10,000 vaccines at any one time" - not antigens. I was speaking very specifically about the infant immune system's ability to respond, in the context of the ridiculous suggestion that the new vaccine combination, containing far fewer antigens than the one it will replace, would overload the immune system. My words were "The immune system of a baby has got huge spare capacity to deal with challenge. If we didn't, the human race wouldn't survive. But let's look specifically at vaccine. This has been studied carefully. A baby's immune system could actually tolerate perfectly well 1,000 vaccines". At no point did I suggest that 1,000 vaccines would not increase the probability of adverse reactions - a quite different matter."*

Email August 26, 2004 10.03am

So, on Salisbury's own account the spare capacity argument is a red herring, more vaccines increase the risk of adverse reaction (which he did not tell us in his Newsnight interview). Presumably it is equally spurious when enunciated by Dr McInnes. Two years after the introduction of Dr Offit's rotavirus vaccine in the United States there are no less than 69 associated deaths on VAERS [3]. Perhaps "huge spare capacity" was not enough.

Meanwhile we have had (unreported in the UK media): -

- the US Government concede that vaccine is implicated in autism in the Hannah Poling case [4]
- Richard Horton's allegations against Andrew Wakefield collapse at the GMC [5, 6]
- the former head of the US National Institutes of Health, Bernadine Healy, warn that the autism vaccine connection has not been properly investigated [7]
- the presentation of three studies at a London conference showing autistic type behaviour in monkeys after vaccination [8, 9]

In May 1966 Time magazine announced [10]:

*"The Federal Government last week declared its determination to eradicate measles from the U.S. in 1967. Up the chain of command from Surgeon General William H. Stewart of the U.S. Public Health Service to President Johnson went the word: from 8,000,000 to 10,000,000 children aged one to seven will be vaccinated this year, largely with the aid of federal funds funneled through 42 state and 61 city-county programs."*

A certain Dr Bruce H Dull of the National Communicable Disease Center explained optimistically: "When two-thirds or more of the children in any community are immune, through having had either the disease or vaccination, the measles virus simply dies out".

Forty years on measles is still with us. When MMR was introduced in this country in 1988 it was "a jab for life". Within a few years we had the pre-school booster: now, apparently, it does not ensure protection for one month.

## References

[1] BBC News On-line, 'Emergency Measles Step Ordered', 19 May 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7408278.stm>

[2] BBC News On-line, 'MMR 'Does Not Trigger Reaction'', 5 February 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7226763.stm>

[3] Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, <http://tinyurl.com/3xstxj>

[4] David Kirby, 'Government Conceded Vaccine-Autism Case in Federal Court - Now What?', Huffington Post, 25 February 2008, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-kirby/government-concedes-vacci\\_b\\_88323.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-kirby/government-concedes-vacci_b_88323.html)

[5] Jane Bryant, 'Lies Exposed at the UK MMR Vaccine Court Trial', The One Click Group, 10 April 2008, <http://www.theoneclickgroup.co.uk/documents/vaccines/Lies%20Exposed%20At%20The%20UK%20MMR%20Vaccine%20Trial%20Court.pdf>

[6] JABS Briefing Note, 'Dr Horton and the GMC Hearing', <http://www.theoneclickgroup.co.uk/documents/vaccines/JABS%20Briefing%20Note,%209%20April%202008.pdf>

[7] CBS News, 'Leading Dr.: Vaccines-Autism Worth Study', 12 May 2008, [http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/05/12/cbsnews\\_investigates/main4086809.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/05/12/cbsnews_investigates/main4086809.shtml)

[8] Dan Olmsted, 'Sick Monkeys: Research Links Vaccine Load, Autism Signs, Age of Autism', 16 May 2008, <http://www.ageofautism.com/2008/05/sick-monkeys-st.html>

[9] Age of Autism, 'Pediatric Vaccines Influence Primate Behaviour: Abstracts', <http://www.ageofautism.com/2008/05/pediatric-vacci.html>

[10] Time Magazine, 'Out, Red Spot', 17 May 1966, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,836830-1,00.html>