

Consent and Communication

Dr Brenda Corcoran
National Immunisation Office



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Objectives

Consent

- To understand
 - the consent process
 - why consent is required
 - what constitutes “informed consent”
- To describe
 - how and who can record consent

Communication

- To understand
- sources of immunisation information
 - how to communicating effectively
 - how to deal with defaulters



What is consent?

Consent is the process whereby a competent patient or parent/guardian signifies their permission to undergo a medical or surgical procedure.



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Why is consent required?

Consent acts as protection for both health professionals and individuals so if any questions are asked in the future there is a record available to show what the individual agreed to on the day of consent



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

What constitutes informed consent?

- Consent
 - must be freely and voluntarily given
 - the patient must have the capacity to give a valid consent
 - sufficient information clearly setting out the
 - benefits
 - risks
 - alternative options.



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Consent in immunisation

- What vaccines will be administered and against which disease they provide protection
- What are the benefits and risks of immunisation and the risks of disease(s)
- What are the possible side effects of immunisation, when might they occur and how should they be treated
- Alternatives to vaccination



www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

What is the age of consent?

- Irish law permits a person aged 16 to consent to treatment.
- For children under 16 consent is given by the parents or a legally recognised guardian



www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

How should consent be recorded?

- Signing the accompanying consent form before the procedure begins
- Important to document
 - decisions and discussions that have taken place with the client
 - information has been supplied to support the decision



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

How should consent be recorded when the client is illiterate?

- If competent
 - make their mark on the consent form
 - mark should then be witnessed by someone other than the administering health professional
- If competent but unable to make their mark or signature
 - record this in the notes
 - witnessed by someone other than the administering health professional.



Recording consent when the client's first language is not English?

- Translated information leaflets
(available at www.immunisation.ie)
- Use of translator



www.immunisation.ie

Who can give consent for children?

- The parent (s)
 - The mother has automatic parental responsibility for the child.
 - The father is also given parental responsibility if
 - he is married to the mother at the time of the child's birth
 - or
 - they marry after the birth of the child or if both adopt the child together
- If a child is born outside marriage the mother is given automatic responsibility for all decisions relating to the child.



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Legally separated parents

- Either parent can give consent except if there are legal conditions to separation
- e.g.
 - one parent has sole custody and conditions imposed by Court re medical treatment



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Consent for medical treatment for foster-children

- A foster parent caring for a child for 5+ years may apply to the Court for an order to consent to any necessary medical treatment
- Must have the consent of the HSE
- Where child is under 16 years of age and
 - in the care of the foster parents for less than 5 years
 - consent of the natural parents and HSE normally required



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Consent for medical treatment of children in the care of the HSE

- The HSE will have the necessary authority to give consent to any medical procedure.
- The child's parent or guardian may
 - have legal entitlement to give consent if contactable and co-operative with medical personnel

The child's interests are always the paramount consideration



www.immunisation.ie

Where do parents get information in relation to immunisation?

- Healthcare professionals (midwives, GP, PHN, community health doctors, paediatricians)
- Community mothers
- Family/friends
- Leaflets
- Media – internet/radio/television



www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Flu vaccine contains mercury

by Fionnuala Quinlan

ALTIM campaigners Kathy Sinnott has expressed concern over the inclusion of mercury in the flu vaccine being promoted by the Department of Health.

Sinnott expresses concern over thiomersal

Thiomersal, a mercury-based vaccine preservative, was widely criticised when it was used in the 1960s to prevent outbreaks of polio. The MMR jab contains thiomersal.

British and American health authorities have recommended that vaccine companies phase out the use of thiomersal.

However, Kathy Sinnott, whose son is autistic, described mercury as a highly-toxic substance.

The Department of Health received over 65,000 calls with health as least as likely to be vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella. A spokesman said that the MMR jab is safe.

Outdated vaccine was given to 12,000 children

Seven Ministry of Health officials and Dr. O'Brien

MEDIA MONITORS
Evening Herald
REF: 30 Vaccines
SUBJ REF:
DATE: 11.12.00

MENINGITIS VACCINE CHILD IS IN A COMA

PRESS CUTTINGS

news
Irish Examiner

Measles vaccine linked to autism

by Carl O'Brien

COMPPELLING evidence of a link between the three in one vaccine and autism has been unearthed, according to a study conducted by an Irish researcher.

Virus found in gut of 24 out of 25 child victims

Kathy Sinnott of the Hope range which represents parents of autistic children, urged the Government to stop funding and support the vaccine campaign. She said the Government is not taking any steps to stop the vaccine campaign. She said the Government is not taking any steps to stop the vaccine campaign.

Probe into meningitis vaccine after 11 babies die

by Carl O'Brien

A MENINGITIS vaccine due for use in Ireland has killed 11 babies.

11 people and is to the vaccine campaign.

experts said received the Irish Medicines Board.

Officials said the deaths were linked to heart conditions and cot deaths.

The meningitis jab immunises young people against the Group C strain of the disease, which is responsible for around one-third of cases.

Under the Irish campaign, the vaccine will be added to the childhood immunisation programme, which is administered to babies at two, four and six months of age.

The British Government has been accused of covering up the deaths, but a spokeswoman said it chose not to make them public for fear of panicking parents into withdrawing their children from inoculation.

Already, some 348 cases of meningitis have been reported in Ireland between January and July of this year, according to the Meningitis Research Foundation.

The killer disease claimed seven lives in the first month of this year alone — over half the total deaths from the disease in 1999.

This month to Cork University Hospital with the C strain of meningococcal disease — more common in the SHB region this year than the more usual B strain — is still being treated.

The most common symptoms of the disease in babies are: high temperature, fretfulness, difficulty in waking, a high-pitched or moaning cry, and a rash of red or purple spots which can materialise very quickly.

Headaches, vomiting, a dislike of bright lights, and drowsiness or coma are the main symptoms seen in children and adults infected with meningococcal disease.

The Meningitis Research Foundation has set up a 24-hour help line. Tel: 01-4969655.



News 2 to 7, 10; World 8 and 9; Business 11 to 13; Opinion 14; Analysis 15; Features 14;

Irish Examiner 13-12-00

GPs lack life-saving vaccine antidote

Fionnuala Quinlan

ST one in 20 GPs vaccinating children against meningitis has all the life-saving equipment listed in the handbook of the vaccination campaign.

"I cannot stand idly by while children continue to be vaccinated in unsafe circumstances"

"GPs are vaccinating children up to the age of five and the health boards are offering them the wrong medical equipment."

The Department of Health's chief medical officer said that the wrong medical equipment is being used in the vaccination campaign.

MEDIA MONITORS
Irish Examiner
REF: Vaccines
SUBJ REF:
DATE: 11.12.00

DOCTORS' WARNING OVER LETHAL MENINGITIS JAB

Be aware of danger to children, parents are told



DOCTORS yesterday warned parents of the deadly side-effects linked to the new vaccine against meningitis C.

While the risk of initial reaction to the vaccine has been linked to the new vaccine against meningitis C.

Since Dan Dan Irish GPs have now had to better public information in that parents and young people can give their informed consent when receiving the vaccine.

Danish doctor Mery Orskov said she backed the national campaign to vaccinate everyone under the age of 15 but she added that people should be aware of the danger to children.

By FIONNANUA QUINLAN

Parents and young people should be informed about what they're getting into. They should know all the side-effects.

The national programme to immunise children against meningitis C was launched by the Department of Health earlier this week.

However, Dr Orskov said there is evidence that the vaccination campaign has a lethal side effect in some cases.

She said: "There will be a significant increase in the UK that are linked to people who have had the vaccine."

This is a new vaccine. It's a little bit like when you're young, you get a little bit of meningitis. It's a little bit like when you're young, you get a little bit of meningitis.

The vaccine is made from a strain of meningitis C which is more common in the UK than in Ireland.

The Department of Health has recommended that people who have had the vaccine should be vaccinated again in the next few years.

The Department of Health has recommended that people who have had the vaccine should be vaccinated again in the next few years.

PRESS CUTTINGS

Why are good communication skills important?

Determines whether the parent/guardian

- understands the advice given and is able to make a fully informed decision
- if the parent will return for vaccination

Any decisions that are made, whether to give or withhold vaccines must be respected



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Focus group testing of information materials for parents 2011

- Beliefs around the link between MMR and Autism persist
 - Spontaneously mentioned in all groups
 - A number of anecdotes about ‘my neighbour’s/cousin’s child had the vaccination and.....’
 - A number referred to friends/family who were refusing MMR
 - Some deferring until child is older
 - *“I will bring her in when she is 18 months – I want her to reach her milestones so that I know she is ok”*



www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

MMR and Autism

1998 Wakefield et al

- 12 children
- Suspected autism/autistic spectrum
- 8 onset of symptoms after MMR vaccine

“We did not prove an association between measles, mumps and rubella vaccine and the syndrome described”

Press conference

“There is sufficient concern in my own mind for a case to be made for vaccines to be given individually at not less than one year intervals”

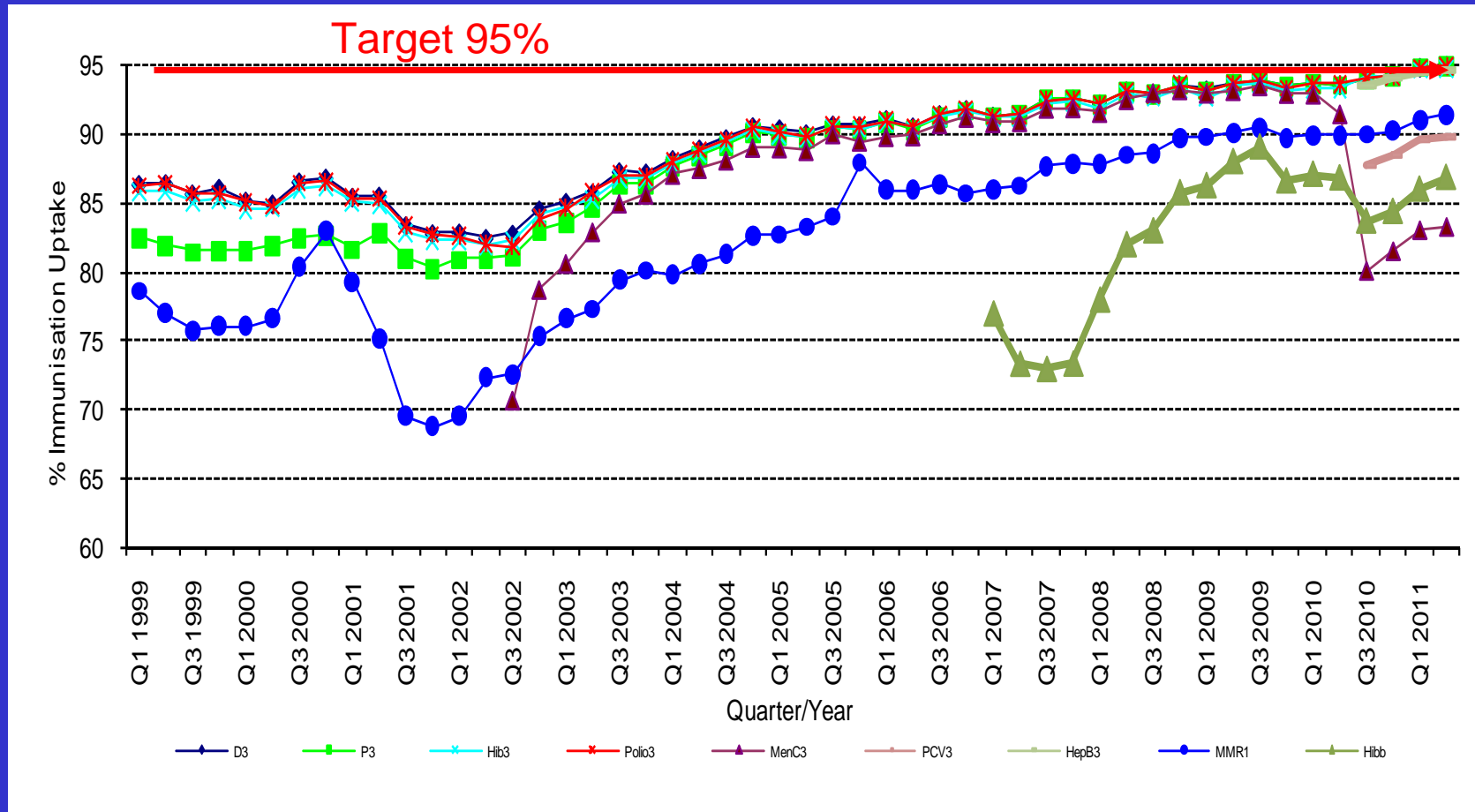


www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Vaccine uptake rate at 24 months 2000-2011



Source: HPSC



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

MMR and Autism (& bowel disease)

1998-2011

- Over 13 robust large scale epidemiological studies
- Shifting hypotheses
- Evidence of no link between
 - MMR vaccine and autism
 - MMR and bowel disease



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



HOW THE CASE AGAINST THE MMR VACCINE WAS FIXED

In the first part of a special *BMJ* series, **Brian Deer** exposes the bogus data behind claims that launched a worldwide scare over the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, and reveals how the appearance of a link with autism was manufactured at a London medical school

When I broke the news to the father of child 11, at first he did not believe me. “Wakefield told us my son was the 13th child they saw,” he said, gazing for the first time at the now infamous research paper which linked a purported new syndrome with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.¹ “There’s only 12 in this.”

That paper was published in the *Lancet* on 28 February 1998. It was retracted on 2 February 2010.² Authored by Andrew Wakefield, John Walker-Smith and 11 others from the Royal Free Hospital and School of Medicine, London, it reported on 12 developmen-

brain and bowel diseases. Child 11 was the penultimate case.

Running his finger across the paper’s tables, over coffee in London, Mr 11 seemed reassured by his anonymised son’s age and other details.

But then he pointed at table 2—headed “neuropsychiatric diagnosis”—and for a second time objected.

“That’s not true.”

Child 11 was among the eight whose parents apparently blamed MMR. The interval between his vaccination and the first “behavioural symptom” was

closed £150 (€180; \$230) an hour through a Norfolk solicitor named Richard Barr, he had been confidentially put on the payroll for two years before the paper was published, eventually grossing him £435 643, plus expenses.⁴

“The regulator’s main focus was whether the research was ethical. Mine was whether it was true”

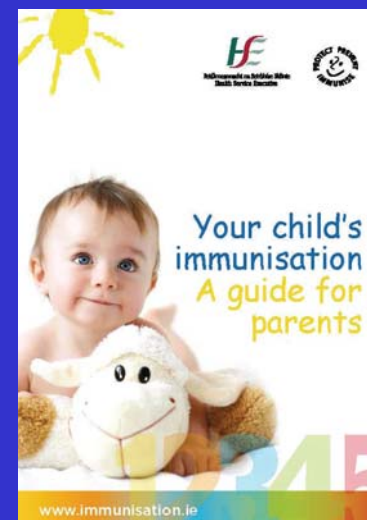
Curiously, however, Wakefield had already identified such a syndrome before the project that would reputedly discover it.

“Children with enteritis/disintegrative disorder [an expression he used for bowel inflammation and regressive autism⁵ form part of a new syndrome.” he

Effective communication strategy

- Have evidence-based knowledge of
 - Vaccines- what they are and how they work
 - Diseases that vaccines prevent
 - Common side effects
 - The risks of not vaccinating
- Be well informed, open and honest
- Recognise factors affecting a decision to vaccinate
- Explore the specific concerns
- Give easily understood culturally acceptable information
- Time to discuss and answer questions

Know when and where to refer for further information



www.immunisation.ie

Defaulters

- No one simple mechanism
- Requires a considerable input
- Encourage opportunistic vaccination
- Up-to-date immunisation information should be available (GP surgeries, HSE Health centres, playschools etc).
- May need to be targeted specifically
 - e.g. have language or literacy difficulties or have difficulty accessing the health services



www.immunisation.ie



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Welcome to the Health Service Executive Immunisation Website

This site provides information on immunisation for the General Public and Healthcare Professionals

Who we are

[Childhood Immunisation](#)

[HPV Programme](#)

[Adult Immunisation](#)

[Healthcare Professionals](#)

[Vaccine Ordering and Storage](#)

[Leaflet Translations](#)

[Ordering Materials](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Publications](#)

[Glossary](#)

[National Conferences](#)

[Useful Websites](#)

**** Whats New ****



[Childhood Immunisation](#)



[Adult Immunisation](#)



[Healthcare Professionals](#)

[Immunisation Schedule](#)



[Click on the link to view information about Vaccination records](#)



Hot Topic

[The first year of HPV vaccination programme has 82% uptake](#)

[Seasonal Influenza Vaccine](#)

[Measles cases rise in Ireland and over 30,000 Measles cases in Europe in 2011](#)

Acknowledgements

**Ms. Edwina Dunne, Head of Quality and Risk,
Health Service Executive.**



www.immunisation.ie



Useful Resources

- Data Protection Commissioner (Ireland) www.dataprotection.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=4
- Department of Health and Children. Consent to medical and surgical procedures.
- www.dohc.ie/public/information/legal_matters_and_health/consent_to_medical_and_surgical_procedures.html
- Irish Statute Book. Guardianship of infants act, 1964.
- www.irishstatutebook.ie/1964/en/act/pub/0007/index.html
- National General Practice Information Technology Group (GPIT) Ireland www.gpit.ie/patient_consent.html
- NHS. Department of Health. Consent – What you have the right to expect. 2005
- www.dh.gov.uk/policyandguidance/healthandsocialcaretopics/consent/consentgeneralinformation/fs/e
- Royal College of Nursing (UK). Informed consent in health and social care research (2001) available from:
- www.rcn.org.uk/publications/pdf/informed_consent_in_health_and_social_care_research.pdf
- The Office for Health Gain. (2000) Meningococcal C vaccine. Guidelines for practitioners including standards of good practice.
- World Health Organisation. Research ethics review committee. The process of seeking informed consent. (2004) www.who.int/rpc/research_ethics/Process_seeking_IF_printing.pdf
- Bedford H, Lansley Information on childhood immunisation: parents' views. Community Pract 2006 Aug; 79(8):252-5
- Bedford H, Elliman D, Concerns about immunisation. BMJ 2000 (320) 240-243
- National Immunisation Office. Health Service Executive. <http://www.immunisation.ie>.



www.immunisation.ie



Reidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive