

**Newsletter 34 Australia's Health Policies are dominated
by Industry Interests
(29th August 2013)**

In 2010 the Baxter report on the reform of the Australian Healthcare system stated that the Commonwealth Health Department is riddled with conflicts of interest. It is reported that advisors to our government health ministers have conflicts of interest with industry that are not being revealed to the public and these representatives are involved in policy development. Whilst these conflict may not be an issue it is important that they are transparent to the public.

The Baxter report also informed the public of the conflict of interest that exists in the roles of the government regulator for vaccines: the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). This body is 100% funded by industry and its role is to approve drugs for the Australian market as well as to monitor the safety of these drugs in the population. In other words, industry is in charge of the health of the Australian population – monitoring the very drugs it has approved for the market. This could explain why the TGA does not have a monitoring system for vaccines that can make causal links between vaccines and adverse events. It can only provide a safety signal to indicate when further investigation may be required (TGA: CDC).

In Australia today the Australian media is now 70% owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd and there are also pro-vaccination lobby groups that are operating as citizen groups and promoting industry interests through the media and on social websites (Michaels 2008; Angell 2005). The public and journalists are being informed that vaccination information on the internet is 'misinformation' and not scientific yet the mainstream media is also providing misinformation and fear mongering instead of scientific evidence. Hence only one side of this debate is being covered in the mainstream media and this situation is being supported by the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA). Here is the link to the AMA report

<http://vaccinationdecisions.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/ACMA-Final-Report-2976-May-2013.pdf>

Some journalists who have said they will not report on the research that is questioning vaccine benefits include Janet Albrechtsen (News Ltd), Sarrah Le Maurquand (News Ltd), Caroline Marcus (News Ltd) and Jonathon Holmes.

Here is the article by Caroline Marcus

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/sarah-wilsons-apparent-support-of-the-anti-vax-movement-irresponsible-writes-caroline-marcus/story-fnh4jt60-1226618512433>

This is the reality in Australia today and these policies and media ownership laws have serious consequences for population health particularly when a public health policy includes a mandatory medical procedure.

For Australians who do not currently have young children please consider the expanded vaccination schedule that our industry influenced health department is forcing on the Australian public with coercive measures. Here is a link to the childhood schedule of vaccines

[http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/4CB920F0D49C61F1CA257B2600828523/\\$File/nips-oct2013.pdf](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/4CB920F0D49C61F1CA257B2600828523/$File/nips-oct2013.pdf)

Currently a bill to exclude unvaccinated children from pre-schools is being discussed in NSW and Qld – without public consultation in NSW. It is time for a public debate on the number of vaccines that should be recommended to children. Until there is evidence that corporate interests are not dominating vaccination policies it is unethical to link childhood vaccination to welfare benefits, school enrolment and employment.

This is against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Medical procedures should not be used with coercive strategies in public health policy – particularly when they are not supported with adequate scientific evidence.

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