

Māori Health Review

Making Education Easy

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Addressing parental concern regarding childhood immunisations

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Summary: A CD-ROM-based tutorial *Addressing Parents Concerns About Childhood Immunizations: A Tutorial for Primary Care Providers* has been developed. The tutorial provides information which explains the nature and origins of parents concerns, discusses the potential clinical implications of reluctance to vaccinate, and the professional and ethical obligations of physicians toward both parents and children. The aim of this study was to test the effectiveness of the tutorial. Subjects were 122 paediatric and family medicine residents at 7 training programmes across 4 states. A 26-item pretest/posttest was used to assess knowledge and attitudes. Improvements in residents' general knowledge, knowledge of adverse effects of immunisation and attitudinal measures were both statistically and clinically significant. The authors suggest that use of the tutorial may help to improve communications between parents and primary care health providers on this subject.

Comment: The number of vaccinations in NZ is increasing with recent additions to the National Immunisation Schedule including MenzB (4 shots for newborns) and Pneumococcal vaccinations. One possible repercussion is that parents, worried about the effectiveness or side effects, choose to forego immunisations for their child. Therefore a resource such as this is timely for providers. Effective communication, including the ability to address parents' concerns, is particularly important.

Reference: *Pediatrics* 2007; 120(1):18-26

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/120/1/18>

Independent commentary by Dr Matire Harwood

Dr Matire Harwood (Ngapuhi) has worked in Hauora Māori, primary health and rehabilitation settings as clinician and researcher since graduating from Auckland Medical School in 1994. She also holds positions on a number of boards, committees and advisory groups including the Health Research Council. Matire lives in Auckland with her whānau including partner Haunui and two young children Te Rangijura and Waimarie.

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