



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on September 9, 2010

## Peddling Flu Vaccines Despite Criticism

Despite a series of vaccine-related scandals and the recent admission from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that its flu-death estimates were wildly inflated, U.S. and global health authorities are teaming up with big business, the mainstream media, and various organizations to urge more Americans to get an influenza shot. But not all experts — or even most of the public — are necessarily on board with the effort.



David Wood, a vaccine boss with the World Health Organization, [claimed](#) at a press conference Monday that the massive swine-flu immunization campaign helped limit the damage caused by the alleged H1N1 “pandemic.” He also noted that the recent vaccine effort “gives us considerable hope for the future” that the technology used in inoculations is effective.

But despite the self-congratulatory remarks, the WHO and its swine-flu campaign have come under heavy fire. “The handling by the WHO of the H1N1 pandemic led to a waste of large sums of public money and unjustified scares and fears about health risks faced by the European public,” [charged](#) the Council of Europe in a report, saying there was “overwhelming evidence that the seriousness of the pandemic was vastly overrated by WHO.” The world health body actually changed the definition of a pandemic during the crisis, allowing it to raise the alert and take emergency measures.

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The European-level investigation discovered improper sway by pharmaceutical companies and vaccine manufacturers on the WHO’s decision-making process, eventually calling for new safe-guards against “undue influence by vested interests.” It also chastised the media and warned against future “sensationalism and scare mongering in the public health domain.”

The man who led the charge to investigate, the Council of Europe’s health committee chairman and medical doctor Wolfgang Wodarg, said the “false pandemic” orchestrated and hyped by the WHO was one of the greatest medical scandals in the last century. He also called for legal action against parties responsible for the hysteria.

“The victims among millions of needlessly vaccinated people must be protected by their states,” Wodarg explained, saying pharmaceutical companies and their cohorts in government were willing to “inflict bodily harm in their pursuit of profits.”

A separate investigation by the *British Medical Journal* and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism [found](#) similar problems with the immunization campaign, noting that at least three of the WHO’s



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“experts” were also being paid by vaccine manufacturers.

In addition to the WHO, the American CDC is also [mounting](#) a massive campaign to vaccinate people against the flu. In fact, following the advice of its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices panel, the government department is now “recommending” for the first time in history that all Americans over six months old get vaccinated against the flu this year. “We’ve been moving in that direction for a number of years,” explained CDC spokesman Tom Skinner.

But ironically, the CDC was recently forced to [admit](#) that its widely cited flu-linked death statistics were way overblown and misleading. The new figures now state that around 23,000 people die from influenza-related complications every year, down from a supposed average of 36,000. Some years the number was actually less than 3,500, the CDC acknowledged. And even those figures are highly suspect, according to experts.

“A closer examination of the CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) figures shows that in 2001, there were only 257 deaths directly attributable to flu, and in only eighteen cases was the flu virus positively identified,” [explained](#) the Alliance for Natural Health on its website, citing a recent [study](#). “Between 1979 and 2002, NCHS data show an average of 1,348 actual flu deaths per year — a mere 5.7% of the ‘new and improved’ estimate.” The group also said the government “has become a full partner with drug companies in the vaccine business” and could not be trusted to tell the truth.

And there has been plenty of other criticism, too. An article published in the *British Medical Journal* found: “If flu is in fact not a major cause of death, [the government’s] public relations approach is surely exaggerated. Moreover, by arbitrarily linking flu with pneumonia and other lung diseases, current data are statistically biased. Until corrected and until unbiased statistics are developed, the chances for sound discussion and public health policy are limited.”

The *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* has also attacked the CDC’s methodology.

Another critic of governments’ vaccine peddling is epidemiologist Tom Jefferson of the well-respected Cochrane Collaboration. He [told](#) *Time* magazine that, “we looked at the science that policymakers use, and it’s disturbing how large the gap is between policy and evidence. We looked at the World Health Organization, CDC and U.K., Australian and German authorities — they have what it is called a ‘citation bias.’ They cite some studies that support vaccines, but other studies that find no effect are left out. Most importantly, there is no critical appraisal of the methods. It’s disturbing.”

Jefferson recommends simple and proven methods like hand washing to protect against the flu, along with more studies of vaccines.

And the public seems to be increasingly skeptical of immunizations as well. According to a [Rasmussen poll](#) released last month, 52 percent of American adults were concerned about the safety of children’s vaccines, with more than a quarter who said they were “very concerned.” Just 13 percent were not at all concerned.

Also noteworthy is the fact that almost half of the 150 million swine flu vaccines purchased by the U.S. government — about half of a billion dollars worth — were ultimately [destroyed](#) after expiring earlier this year. That was despite, as the Associated Press reported, health officials “trying gimmicks to get anyone at all to come in for a shot.” One potential reason for the lack of demand was the fact that numerous health experts expressed [serious concerns about the safety and efficacy of the vaccines](#).

In Finland, swine-flu vaccinations were actually [halted](#) after being linked to a 300 percent increase in



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the neurological disorder known as narcolepsy. Throughout Europe, countless swine-flu shots purchased by governments have also been wasted due to a lack of demand. And the evidence seems to indicate that the skepticism trend will only grow.

But soon, vaccine manufacturers could have so-called “captive” consumers. Several government entities in the U.S., most notably the state of New York, have [attempted](#) to enact mandatory vaccination regimes — at least for health-care workers. So far they have not succeeded.

But various groups like the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Physicians are still [pushing](#) to make vaccines mandatory for all health workers. Certain hospitals that receive government funds have already made shots mandatory. [Talk of mandatory swine-flu vaccines](#) for the general public during the “pandemic” was also frequent. And under the ["new world" of ObamaCare](#), the prospect of government vaccine workers making house-to-house visits may soon become a reality.

Pharmacy chains like CVS and Walgreens — which purchased a full-page ad in USA Today touting its vaccination scheme — have also been busy attempting to increase demand for this year’s flu vaccine. The [mainstream press](#) has largely been parroting the government’s recommendations as well. State health officials are [prodding](#) citizens to get vaccinated too.

But the fact remains that the federal government has no constitutional authority to promote particular medical treatments — let alone help implement vaccination campaigns. And with the growing attacks on authorities’ figures and information, it’s time for Congress to disband the massive, unconstitutional “health” bureaucracies. Americans should make decisions on vaccines and other healthcare questions with their families and doctors, not under pressure from Big Brother propaganda.

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