

Immune response

Many parents who read *GP* will no doubt be surprised at the unwarranted display of medical epithet exhibited by Dr Siniva Sinclair (Letters, *GP*, August 22). To my knowledge, she's not qualified as a chemist, biochemist, toxicologist, neurologist, epidemiologist, paediatric immunologist or an infectious disease expert, yet considers herself able to assess the competence of more distinguished colleagues.

Professor Boyd Haley's research programmes show his work to be not only highly specialised, but requiring considerable expertise in toxicology, biochemistry and immunology.

Professor Haley found that though the makers of MMR say it has no mercury in it, not only is it cytotoxic, its toxicity is increased by a synergistic response to aluminium and exposure to light, for even two minutes. Combine this with the fact that, until August 2000, MMR was given simultaneously with Tetramune, which contained mercury.

Since most of the children already treated here have received this combination containing mercury, I would be interested in research done on the *in vivo* response of the 15-month-old immune system to such a chemical cocktail. So far, Professor Haley has been the sole researcher to present reliable data.

Perhaps there should also be discussion about research being organised on the possible connection between MMR and autism by Dr Walter Spitzer, Dr Victor Goldbloom and a whole host of similarly concerned doctors. This \$17 million study is a serious, objective and scientifically rigorous five-year proposed association/aetiology study that will span nine countries.

Such a study would not be considered were there not serious concerns among experts. Similarly, the work of Professor Vijendra Singh of Utah State University paints a worrying picture, yet how many doctors here know, or take seriously, his work?

What is needed is rational constructive dialogue aimed at scientifically proving the worth, or otherwise, of vaccines currently suggested for use by parents. What is not needed is unscientific, irrational dismissal by epithet from people not qualified to comment.

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