

25 July 2012

The Chairman
World Medical Association
13, ch. du Levant
CIB – Bâtiment A
01210 Ferney-Voltaire
FRANCE

By email: secretariat@wma.net

Person centred medicine/prioritisation of vaccination/forced sterilisation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these position statements. The New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) notes that, while there were five options to consider, our comments are limited to the three mentioned above.

Proposed World Medical Association (WMA) statement on the prioritisation of vaccination

The NZMA supports the above statement in principle but suggest the following amendments.

There is a typographical error in paragraph 10 (should read “decreasing number [of] cases...”).

We believe that the wording in paragraph 11 could be stronger and should state its condemnation of those who produce forged evidence about vaccination harm or who otherwise irresponsibly (or in ignorance) propagate inaccurate information. We also suggest adding the word “inaccurate” to the paragraph. (i.e. irresponsible [and inaccurate] claims...) While the NZMA supports vaccination, we are firmly of the view that this should remain voluntary and we would be concerned if the document morphed into support for compulsory vaccination.

Proposed WMA statement on person centred medicine

While we may support the call for person centred medicine in the future (the NZMA already supports patient centred medicine), the statement as it currently reads fails to explain how the ideals espoused translate into action or advise of what changes need to be made. Indeed, it is difficult to conceptualise what is required of a doctor trying to practice as “holistically” as possible.

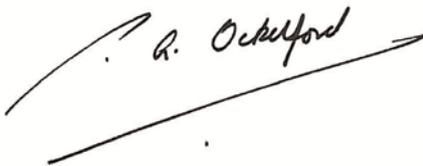
Further, in order to for the NZMA to support the statement, we would like to see reference to the evidence in how patient centred medicine improves health.

The NZMA accepts, however, that good medical practice needs to consider all that the patient is (i.e. beliefs, social setting etc) and not just the disease in order for the patient to be cared for properly.

Proposed WMA statement on forced and coerced sterilisation

The NZMA agrees with the sentiment, but believes that the document should also address and/or acknowledge the situation where the individual is incapable of making their own decision. It should acknowledge the role of their advocate or legal representative.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dr Paul Ockelford". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Dr Paul Ockelford
NZMA Chair