Let's talk vaccines

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Smallpox in the Pacific Northwest

Captain Vancouver remarked in his journal in 1792 on the “present apparent depopulation of the coastline” – most notable among the Coast Salish peoples who lived on the shores of Puget Sound.

I frequently met with human bone during my rambles [and] encountered an Uninhabited Village nearly a half Mile long constructed with a good deal of regularity and ornament with a prodigious number of carved logs...which once gave lodging to many hundred”

Thomas Manby, Crewman

“Each of the deserted villages was nearly if not quite equal to contain all the scattered inhabitants we saw.”

George Vancouver, Captain

Meningococcal A Conjugate Vaccine
PsA-TT (MenAfriVac)

2009:
> 88,000 cases
> 5000 deaths

2013, Jan 1-May 15:
9,250 cases
857 deaths
Summary Impact of PCV7 and PCV13 Introduction 1998-2012

Following PCV7 introduction, 280,000 cases & 19,000 deaths prevented. An additional 20,000 cases & 2,000 deaths prevented after introduction of PCV13.

Source: CDC, unpublished (used with permission from M. Moore)
Vaccine-Preventable Disease Outbreaks

www.cfr.org/vaccinemap
A Rising Tide of Immunization Hesitancy

2000
- 19% of parents do not think vaccines are proven safe

2004
- 92% of pediatricians report parental vaccine refusal

2008
- ~20% of parents now delay or refuse some vaccines

2010
- >30% of parents now delay or refuse some vaccines

Building Vaccine Hesitancy Solutions for WA State & Beyond

Vax Northwest is a group of community agencies collaborating to address immunization hesitancy in WA State by designing, implementing, & evaluating two innovative interventions for clinicians & communities.

Immunization Exemptions, WA State 1999-2009

- 1999
- 2009
Parents want to do what is best for their child... but face a conundrum: *What to believe?*
Provider Intervention Study

- Based on application of social marketing principles; 3 years of needs assessment & pilot studies in WA State
- Modeled on a client-centered approach to communication with vaccine-hesitant parents & motivational interviewing techniques:
  - Ask; Acknowledge; Advise
- Randomized controlled trial in 56 clinics
- Assess:
  - Physician confidence – self-efficacy
  - Parent attitudes – vaccine hesitancy
Community Intervention Study

- Activate & directly engage parents who immunize
- Reinforce the value of a healthy local community using local data & expertise
- Train volunteer advocates in child & schools
- Develop tool kits, messages, other resources
- Use social media, earned media to support parents’ engagement
- Assess:
  - Immunization attitudes
  - Policy changes
  - Exemption rates
Some of the Many Lessons We Have Learned

● Interventions
  – Clinicians, parents are willing to participate in provider intervention – vaccine hesitancy high-priority issue
  – Some communities concerned project could prove divisive

● Assessment
  – Logistically complex: change in days unimmunized is “gold standard” outcome, but very challenging – relied on intermediate outcomes
  – Need relatively large numbers of participants & high baseline rate of vaccine hesitancy to demonstrate statistically significant effects

● Assumptions
  – Emerging evidence challenges the utility of some immunization communication strategies:
    • Responding to misinformation
    • “Marketing” vaccine safety
    • Heightening concerns about growing numbers of vaccine-hesitant
  – Initial assumptions about effective parent-provider communication were simplistic
    • Were based on experience & expert opinion
New research suggests how an immunization discussion is initiated affects the outcome:

- **Participatory**
  - “Did you want to get some vaccines for him today?”
  - “So what are we going to do about vaccines today?”
  - “How do you feel about vaccination?”

- **Presumptive**
  - “It’s time for some vaccines...we’re going to be doing two live vaccines today: the MMR and the chicken pox.”

- **Effect on parent satisfaction**
  - Preliminary analysis suggests presumptive approach increases vaccine uptake on that visit but decreases parent satisfaction!

Sources: Opel DJ et al. *Pediatrics* 2013:132:6;1037-1046; Pediatric Academic Societies meeting, May, 2014 Vancouver BC
Centuries of scientific observation and prophets wise have shown us: what we know defines what we know not, and that is where our future lies.

*Carolyn Breese Hall*
What we know not...

- How and when attitudes toward immunization are formed
- The relative weights of specific factors other than science-based information in vaccine decisions
- How & when to influence attitudes & beliefs
- Effectiveness of tailored messages
- The importance of peer-to-peer communication in vaccine decision-making or the utility of peer-to-peer community interventions
Myth of Science Illiteracy As a Root Cause
(Deficit Model)

● When the relation between science and society breaks down, science illiteracy is blamed
  – Vaccine hesitancy
  – Fluoridated water supplies
  – Global warming
  – Radiated food
  – Nuclear waste disposal
  – Genetically modified foods

● Science literacy accounts for only a small fraction of the variance of how lay publics form opinions about controversial areas of science

● All who raise questions about vaccines and immunization policies are not “unable to understand concepts of risk (innumerate)” or “of low cognitive complexity”

Source: Nesbit NC, Sheufele DA. Am J Botany 2009;96:1767-78
Knowledge, Attitudes & Beliefs

- Ideology, partisanship, political context, religious identity, values, trade-offs among benefits, risks & costs are far stronger influences than is science
  - Example: Acceptance of evidence of climate change by well-informed college graduates:
    
    More likely to accept if political party A
    More likely to reject if political party B

- Conflicts arise principally from differing values, perceptions, beliefs & fears – termed cultural differences

Cultural Cognition

- Even when expert consensus emerges on a complex issue, members of the public can’t verify it for themselves.
- So what we choose to believe derives from our cultural world view:

  ![Diagram](Diagram.png)

  - Hierarchist
  - Individualist
  - Egalitarian
  - Communitarian

- We rely on such short-cuts to deal with complexity

“Sure, I follow the herd—not out of brainless obedience, mind you, but out of a deep and abiding respect for the concept of community.”
Implications of Cultural Cognition

- Relying on disseminating sound information to dispel disagreement is futile, because in deciding if the evidence is sound, individuals rely on their cultural evaluations.

- The key is to frame...information in terms that make agreement “compatible with, rather than antagonistic to the commitments of individuals with diverse cultural persuasions”.

Managing Values Conflict in a Democratic Society

- Addressing vaccine hesitancy requires more than insightful message framing & expert social marketing

- What should be the balance between:
  - the state’s duty to protect the public health
  - an individual’s right of free choice
  - at what point does the risk to the public health trump free choice?

- What disease risk balanced by what assurance of vaccine safety justifies an enforced mandate? What degree of coercion is warranted?

- What degree of societal consensus is required?
  - who should decide: public health, judges, legislators?

Source: Feudtner C, Marcuse E. *Pediatrics* 2001;107:1158-1164
Trend in Cases of Imported Measles as a Proportion of All Measles Cases, U.S. 2001-2013

Source: MMWR 2013,52(36):752-753
Conclusions

- Scope of vaccine hesitancy is unprecedented and widening
- Response to hesitancy emerging from the current immunization policy process appears inadequate
- Fear and compulsion have limited potential to sustain the immunization consensus needed
- We badly need evidence on how best to shape public knowledge, attitudes & beliefs to support immunization & public health
- Must shift from reactive to proactive long-term strategy
- Time to consider redesigning the policy-making process to involve additional expertise (communication, behavioral economics, anthropology...) and involve new stakeholders (business, information technology, education...)

DO NOT FORGET THE FUNDAMENTALS!

Preliminary results from an ongoing analysis of national data suggest that the parents of most US measles-susceptible children have vaccine beliefs similar to those of parents of immunized children and that their children are susceptible primarily due to missed opportunities...
Newer Strategies for Vaccine Development

• Reverse vaccinology
• Adjuvants, including cytokines, TLR agonists
• Viral recombinants
• Defective particles replication
• Replicating vectors recombined with genes from pathogens
• DNA plasmids
• Gene delivery by invasive bacteria
• Transcriptomics and proteomics
• Induction of innate immunity
• Dendritic cell targeting
• Therapeutic vaccines

Source: Adapted from Plotkin, 2008,2011
## Major Uncontrolled Infectious Diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Vaccine likely licensed by 2018</th>
<th><strong>Vaccine studies in humans underway</strong></th>
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<td>Tuberculosis</td>
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<td>Urinary tract infection</td>
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<td>West Nile Virus</td>
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*Vaccine likely licensed by 2018
**Vaccine studies in humans underway

Source: Adapted from Plotkin, 2011; Englund, 2013
1954
World’s First Pocket Radio

1987
World’s First Conjugate Vaccine

2013
Google Glass

2047
?????
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Carolyn Breese Hall