

## OPEN LETTER BY NZ MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS SHARING CONCERNS ABOUT PFIZER 'COMIRNATY' INVESTIGATIONAL VACCINE FOR COVID-19

We write formally to express our shared concern that:

- 1) A new prescription only medicine with s23(1) provisional approval, which legally can only be for the treatment of a limited number of patients, is being promoted for the entire adult population of Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- 2) Medsafe asked 58 questions, but the answers for most of these are not due until March to July 2021.
- 3) The clinical trials will not be completed until 2023.
- 4) Nobody currently knows how safe or effective this novel mRNA technology is in the medium to long term, but highly credible medical experts around the world, and even some vaccine developers themselves, are predicting problems and raising urgent red-flag concerns.
- 5) If any safety issues are identified in the remaining period of the trials the effects could be catastrophic for our community or a proportion that have already received the vaccine.
- 6) The signatories are mindful of their obligations to discuss risks, benefits and uncertainties of any treatment and to ensure informed consent of all patients before giving any treatment and of the other important obligations under the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights. Our insurers have affirmed this obligation.
- 7) Compelling patients or workers to receive drug, medicine or vaccine which is still investigational would set a significant medical precedent, which would run counter to all international codes of medical ethics since the Nuremberg Code of 1947 and Declaration of Helsinki in 1952. The fundamental tenets of these include complete disclosure of the risks and unknowns to the participants in medical experiments; the obligations on the experimenter for care and after-care of adverse outcomes; and the freedom from coercion, stand over tactics and over-reach. This would seem to include threats of job loss, travel bans etc. Many patients feel pressured to accept this vaccine in the mistaken belief they may protect others due to representations in the media and/or pressure from their employers, and that they may lose their employment or may be disadvantaged in their employment if they do not accept this experimental vaccine.
- 8) The signatories are concerned to ensure that the Ministry of Health, College of GPs and the Medical Council of NZ are aware of the above concerns, and that they are addressed with urgency to ensure the way the vaccine is being promoted to healthy people who do not require treatment is both lawful and represents best practice.
- 9) We are eager to clarify that any patients injured by the vaccine will have acknowledgement and cover from ACC.

10) The signatories note that even the promoters of the vaccine do not claim that it prevents transmission and that public representations that the vaccine is effective for this purpose are misleading.

11) We do not accept that lay vaccinators are qualified or competent to partake in the process of informed consent to patients re this vaccine, especially as they have no medical expertise and no prior knowledge of the individual circumstances of the patient or their health issues. Any risk benefit assessment and consideration of alternatives is complex and requires a considered consultation by a qualified practitioner.

Ref: Informed consent disclosure to vaccine trial subjects of risk of COVID-19 vaccines worsening clinical disease. Int J Clin Pract 2021:75e13795.

Signed:

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