

## **NVIC Says BMJ Review Demonstrates Medical Journal Bias Toward Pharma-Sponsored Influenza Vaccines Studies**

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WASHINGTON--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))-- In a review of influenza vaccine studies published in the [British Medical Journal](#) Tom Jefferson, M.D., Ph.D. (Cochrane Field, Rome, Italy) and colleagues found that published influenza vaccine studies sponsored by industry are treated more favorably by medical journals even when the studies are of poor quality. "This independent Cochrane review confirms that drug companies marketing vaccines have undue influence on what gets published in medical journals about vaccine safety and effectiveness," said Barbara Loe Fisher, president of the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC), a non-profit vaccine safety watchdog group that earlier this week issued a [new report on Gardasil vaccine risks](#).

"Relation of study quality, concordance, take home message, funding and impact in studies of influenza vaccines: a systematic review"

Jefferson and his colleagues identified and assessed 274 published studies on influenza vaccines for their methodological quality and found no relationship between study quality, publication in prestige journals or their subsequent citation in other articles. They also found that most influenza vaccine studies are of poor quality but those with conclusions favorable to influenza vaccinations are of significantly lower methodological quality. The

single most important factor determining where the studies were published or how much they were cited was sponsorship, with those partially or wholly funded by the pharmaceutical industry having higher visibility.

Dr. Jefferson commented, "The study shows that one of the levers for accessing prestige journals is the financial size of your sponsor. Pharma sponsors order many reprints of studies supporting their products, often with in house translations into many languages. They also purchase advertising space in the journal. Many publishers openly advertise these services on their website. It is time journals made a full disclosure of their sources of funding."

The National Vaccine Information Center ([www.NVIC.org](http://www.NVIC.org)) is calling on the [Obama Administration and Congress](#) to investigate Gardasil vaccine risks and has long questioned the inappropriate influence of vaccine manufacturers in federal vaccine licensing and policymaking and state vaccine mandates.

For more information on the BMJ study "Relation of study quality, concordance, take home message, funding and impact in studies of influenza vaccines: a systematic review," visit <http://www.BMJ.com> or [www.NVIC.org](http://www.NVIC.org).

### **Contacts**

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