

Press release 21 September 2009 – for immediate release

The swine flu vaccine – more dangerous than the disease?

How safe is the swine flu vaccine? The Alliance of Registered Homeopaths (ARH) is calling on the UK government, and the NHS to provide full, detailed and honest information to the general public about the safety of the swine flu vaccination, before it is given to large numbers of patients.

Whilst the seriousness of contracting swine flu seems to be limited, the potential adverse reactions of this new, and hastily tested vaccination, cannot be fully known at this stage. This leads to the important question; ***are adverse reactions to the vaccination likely to be worse than the potential dangers of the illness?***

There have been many reports over recent months that raise concerns about the vaccination, chiefly that it has been insufficiently tested, and that its effects on children and pregnant women, are as yet unknown. But much more specific concerns have also been raised. The Daily Mail reported (15 August 2009) that the vaccination has been linked to Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a ‘killer’ nerve disease. This information was obtained from a ‘leaked’ letter from the Health Protection Agency (HPA) to the UK Government.

The ARH also notes that a significant number of GPs appear to have doubts about having the vaccination themselves. The Daily Telegraph reported (25 August 2009) that a survey had shown that three in ten GPs said they would not have the swine flu vaccine, whilst a further 29% had doubts about it.

This followed another survey which found one in three nurses will refuse the swine flu vaccination ***‘because they have fears about its safety’*** (Guardian, 18 August 2009).

Steve Scrutton, Director of ARH, says that people who are concerned about contracting swine flu should be told about the potential dangers of the vaccination. They should also be provided with access to safe, effective prophylaxis and treatment for the illness, through the NHS. He said,

“Homeopaths have been successfully treating people suffering from influenza for over two centuries. The remedies homeopaths frequently prescribe to treat influenza, such as Gelsemium, Bryonia Alba and Eupatorium Perfoliatum, are both highly effective and entirely safe.

Homeopathy has also been used in epidemic situations for over 200 years, with contemporary sources showing that it was hugely successful. Karin Mont, Chair of ARH, said;

“Homeopathy’s success at treating the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918 is well documented, especially in the USA. The medical records of hospitals across the

country consistently show a mortality rate of above 28% in sufferers treated conventionally, as opposed to a mortality rate of just over 1% of those treated with homeopathy”.

(A more detailed account of homeopathy's efficacy in treating the Spanish flu outbreak in the US, is documented in a report to the Journal of the American Institute of Homeopathy, entitled 'Homeopathy in Influenza – A Chorus of Fifty in Harmony (1921)', by WA Dewey, MD.)

The swine flu vaccination will soon become available in the UK, and it is expected that many thousands of people will be encouraged to take it. The ARH supports informed patient choice, and believes that anyone taking any form of medication should be fully aware of both the potential benefits and dangers, and the alternative treatments that are available to them.

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THE ALLIANCE OF REGISTERED HOMEOPATHS INFORMATION FOR EDITORS

The Alliance of Registered Homeopaths (ARH) is a UK professional organisation that supports and promotes a high standard of safe, effective homeopathic practice. It currently represents over 700 practising homeopaths.

We are committed to:

- ensuring that quality homeopathy is available to all who wish to use it
- raising public awareness of the potential of homeopathic treatment
- encouraging a high standard of education for homeopaths
- supporting the ongoing professional development of our Members
- encouraging co-operation between our Members and other healthcare professionals, for the benefit of patients
- engaging in research, publishing and other activities that enhance our understanding of homeopathy
- acting as an information base for the general public.