

Date

Dear

As you may be aware, several routine childhood vaccines are produced using cell strains derived from fetuses aborted several decades ago. Many parents take issue with this, equating use of these vaccines with justification of abortion and implied approval of the use of aborted fetal cell strains in ongoing research and pharmaceutical manufacture. These parents not only acknowledge the value of wide-spread immunization in the protection of their own children, they also recognize the role of vaccination in controlling and eradicating specific diseases on a global scale. Yet, they continue to be noncompliant in having their children vaccinated with these products due to moral reasons. A decrease in immunization levels among the general populace threatens the effectiveness of immunization programs as a whole. Ultimately, disease resurgence may result. Securing access to ethical alternatives would result in a greater level of compliance, a healthier population and a decrease in government health care spending.

One alternative that will soon be available is Pediacel®, which is to replace Pentacel® in the routine childhood immunization schedule, starting in October, 2007. While concerned parents appreciate that an ethical alternative to one of the offending vaccines will soon be available, none are available for several of the other commonly used vaccines. At present, there are no ethical alternatives to the rubella component of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine available in Canada, although they do exist in Europe and Japan. No alternatives for the Chicken Pox vaccines exist anywhere in the world. Offering parents ethically acceptable choices would be in keeping with goals outlined in the National Immunization Strategy (NIS):

- “-Provide high, achievable and measurable coverage of publicly funded immunization programs for all Canadians.
- Ensure that there is equitable access to routinely recommended vaccines – among jurisdictions and in special populations...
- Promote public and professional acceptance of recommended programs.
- Provide optimal vaccine safety, effectiveness and acceptance.”

(Public Health Agency of Canada. Canadian National Report on Immunization, 2006. CCDR 2006;32S3:1).

I request that you urge Health Canada to work together with pharmaceutical companies towards making ethical alternatives available for all the offending routine immunizations, starting with MMR and chicken pox vaccines.

Please direct your reply to the contact information listed below.

Sincerely,