TGA submission - Could Covid-19 vaccines facilitate the evolution of more virulent variants?

1 message

Elizabeth Hart <elizmhart@gmail.com> Mon, Feb 1, 2021 at 3:42 PM
To: info@tga.gov.au

As discussed with Liana at the TGA, please ensure the email below is forwarded to Adjunct Professor John Skerritt.

For the attention of:
Adjunct Professor John Skerritt
Deputy Secretary
Health Products Regulation Group (including the Therapeutic Goods Administration)
Australian Government Department of Health

Dear Professor Skerritt

Re: Could Covid-19 vaccines facilitate the evolution of more virulent variants?

Re COVID-19 vaccine products granted provisional determination by the TGA, i.e. Pfizer Australia Pty Ltd / BNT162b2, AstraZeneca Pty Ltd / ChAdOx1-s, Janssen-Cilag Pty Ltd / Ad26.COV2.S, and Biocelect Pty Ltd (on behalf of Novavax Inc) / NVX-CoV2373.

Questions are being raised about the new coronavirus variants[1,2,3,4], and their emergence in the UK, South Africa and Brazil - is it coincidental these countries are where AstraZeneca vaccine trials are underway?

Could the new coronavirus variants be related to the possibility that the vaccines may not prevent transmission, and therefore facilitate the evolution of new variants?

For example, UK Deputy Chief Medical Officer Jonathan Van-Tam says **"...we do not yet know the impact of the vaccine on transmission of the virus. So even after you have had both doses of the vaccine you may still give Covid-19 to someone else and the chains of transmission will then continue"**.[5]

With the possibility the experimental coronavirus vaccine products might not prevent transmission of the virus, is it possible these could be 'leaky vaccines', i.e. **"anti-disease vaccines that do not prevent transmission"** which **"can create conditions that promote the emergence of pathogen strains that cause more severe disease in unvaccinated hosts"?** This is described in Andrew F. Read et al's study re Marek's disease in poultry, i.e. **Imperfect vaccination can enhance the transmission of highly virulent pathogens**, published in 2015.[6]

While Read et al note most human vaccines are sterilizing (transmission-blocking) - (e.g. the measles vaccine), Read is **"concerned about the next generation of vaccines that are being developed against diseases like HIV and malaria. People don't naturally develop life-long immunity to these conditions after being infected, as they would against, say, mumps or measles. This makes vaccine development a tricky business, and it means that the resulting vaccines will probably leak to some extent."** Read says **"This isn't an argument against developing those vaccines, but it is an argument for ensuring that we carefully check for transmission."**[7]

Professor Skerritt, what does this mean for the experimental coronavirus vaccine products that are soon to be rushed out into the Australian community?

Is the TGA's evaluation of vaccine manufacturers' data considering the potential for coronavirus vaccine products to be 'leaky vaccines'?

Is anyone thinking about the potential problems that might arise if these vaccines do indeed fail to prevent transmission, and what this might mean for the unvaccinated, i.e. if these could be **"anti-disease vaccines that do not prevent transmission"** which **"can create conditions that promote the emergence of pathogen strains that cause more severe disease in unvaccinated hosts"**?

Professor Skerritt, I request your acknowledgement of this email and the TGA's urgent consideration of this matter.

Sincerely
Elizabeth Hart
Independent person investigating the ***over-use*** of vaccine products and conflicts of interest in vaccination policy

References:
1. Covid-19: What new variants are emerging and how are they being investigated? BMJ 2021;372:n158.
2. Andrew D Stevens BMJ Rapid Response: Re: Covid-19: What new variants are emerging and how are they being investigated? 22 January 2021.
3. How the Oxford-AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine was made. BMJ 2021;372:n86.
4. Rajalakshmi Lakshman BMJ Rapid Response: Re: How the Oxford-AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine was made. 23 January 2021.
5. The vaccine has given us hope, but we still need to follow the rules. The Telegraph, 23 January 2021.
6. Andrew F. Read et al. Imperfect vaccination can enhance the transmission of highly virulent pathogens. PLoS Biol. 2015 Jul; 13(7): e1002198.
7. Leaky vaccines enhance spread of deadlier chicken viruses. National Geographic. 27 July 2015.