

Review of: "Relevance of Medical Ethics in Public Health: Case Study of Polio Eradication"

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Potential competing interests: The reviewer is a former employee of Sanofi Pasteur, a polio vaccine manufacturer. But since 2018 he has no direct or indirect link with any commercial company. Therefore, no potential competing interests to declare.

Page 2 : « Participants have to give informed consent “. You may want to elaborate a little, i.e. “based on proper information of expected risks and benefits, and with an absolute right to participate or not without prejudice and to withdraw at any time from the clinical trials” or something along these lines.

Page 2: “Later it was revised: what is not in the best interests of individuals cannot be in the best interests of the community.” This is obviously a major ethical issue, can you provide a reference for this statement?

General question: the reader is unclear as to which is the key issue raised by the authors about the use of OPV. Is it that the decision to base polio eradication on the use of OPV was based on an inaccurate assessment of the risks of VAPP following OPV administration in vaccinated children and “bystanders” at the time the decision was made? Or that this decision was not revised as evidence accumulated over time about the risks of VAPP vs. those caused by wild poliovirus circulation? Or do they mean to point at both issues? This question is raised by several statements such as:

- Page 2: “When the World Health Organisation (WHO) decided to eradicate polio”.
- Page 3: “Prima facie, the vaccine choice was flawed;”
- Page 4 “The known safety risks of OPV were taken nonchalantly”.

General comment: the notion of risk-benefit related with the use of OPV, especially its evolution over time as less and less WPV circulated, would deserve being better addressed in this paper. Individual and collective risk-benefit assessment is a key tenet of medical ethics. It would deserve being better discussed in this paper.