

9) MEASLES AND CROHN'S DISEASE

**9.1 IS MEASLES VACCINATION A RISK FACTOR FOR
INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE?**

JCVI (95) 64

PAPER BY THOMPSON ET.AL., Lancet Vol. 345, 29 April 1995

Reference had been made to this report at the last meeting of the Committee (discussed at paragraph 6.15 of the Minutes).

In April the proof of the Lancet article and commentary on the research at the Royal Free Hospital had been seen in the Department. Officials were also aware of the letters to the Lancet reporting an unsuccessful attempt in Japan to obtain the same results using more sensitive test methods. The Department had also become aware that the Royal Free Hospital was to hold a press briefing for the issue of the report and that there was much press interest. Officials had had to consider the best steps to take in this event and what impact the issue of this report might have on the public with regard to measles/MMR immunisation. The Department had felt it appropriate to put its case into the public domain and a press briefing was given by CMO to announce the results of the MR campaign at which the issue of CD had been touched upon.

The relationship between CD and measles was not a straightforward matter. US researchers had used the Royal Free reagents to replicate the research and were not able to replicate the Royal Free results; they believed that the Royal Free virology was artifactual. Another, preliminary report from the US had tried to find measles virus genome in CD using PCR, without success. No-one had been able to replicate the Royal Free findings. The CMO was to write to the Lancet as were others.

The Committee agreed that the research was unsound. The report had shown associations first with the natural virus and then with attenuated virus. The epidemiology was questionable and the interpretations were unjustified. Inappropriate control groups had been chosen. There were also flaws in virology as the immuno-gold method, which had been used by the Royal Free, lacked specificity. The Committee noted that very few organisms had not been investigated for the cause of CD but that the only constant in the condition was smoking. The Committee agreed that, following consideration of the report, there was no evidence on which to change current immunisation policy.

**9.2 MEASLES VACCINATION AND INFLAMMATORY BOWEL
DISEASE; COMMENTARY**

JCVI (95) 65

Lancet Vol. 345, 29 April 1995

9.3 LETTERS TO THE LANCET

JCVI (95) 66

These were noted.