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March 17, 2020

To Governor Inslee, Secretary of Health Wiesman, Chief Science Officer Lofy, Washington State Legislators, Senator Patty Murray, and Senator Maria Cantwell:

Re: COVID-19 vaccine testing

Many citizens and scientists are voicing their concerns over the way COVID-19 vaccine testing is being rushed. Of particular concern is:

- the absence of extensive completed animal-model safety testing, which is necessary to assess product safety before being given to humans for the first time, and
- no inert placebo control group in the very first human trial of the vaccine compound ([NCT04283461](#)), making its safety profile undeterminable without knowing the baseline rate of adverse medical events in a placebo group.

As a scientist recently testified to Congress, the COVID-19 virus is in a family of viruses for which vaccine development has proved dangerous, as animals receiving experimental SARS vaccines were not protected but instead predisposed to more severe disease when challenged with the wild virus. While we understand the urgency behind the push for rapid development of a COVID-19 vaccine, proceeding with human trials before extensive animal testing is completed may endanger the trial participants who are recruited from the area where the virus is circulating, as well as the general population, if the vaccine is fast-tracked.

“The concern that is extrapolated from the FIPV vaccine experience to human SARS-CoV vaccines is whether vaccine recipients will develop more severe disease if they are exposed to or infected with SARS-CoV after neutralizing antibody titers decline. The second concern is whether recipients of a SARSCoV vaccine would be at risk of developing pulmonary immunopathology following infection with an unrelated human coronavirus e.g. 229E, OC43, HKU1 or NL63 that usually causes mild, self limited disease. Although findings from preclinical evaluation have revealed these concerns, studies in animal models may not be able to provide data to confirm or allay these concerns.”

Animal models for SARS and MERS coronaviruses
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4550498>

Please take action to ensure needed animal testing is completed, that human trials include inert-placebo control groups before licensing, and that caution is heeded.

Public trust in vaccine products is at an all-time low. Failure to ensure that trials on any COVID-19 vaccine product are conducted ethically and thoroughly will further erode trust.

Bernard D. Goldstein, Professor Emeritus with the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, wrote:

“The core maxim of the precautionary principle is that an action should not be taken when there is scientific uncertainty about its potential impact. We in public health must recognize that the precautionary principle applies to our own actions, that when a public health action is proposed, the burden of proof—to ensure that all risks and consequences are taken into account—rests on us just as surely as it rests on others.”

The Precautionary Principle Also Applies to Public Health Actions
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1446778/>

Pandemics of novel pathogens require immediate focus on prophylactic and treatment therapeutics to protect as many as possible from infection and to minimize loss of life. Recovery protocols, such as Vitamin C infusions and chloroquine, are saving lives worldwide; **plasma therapy must begin as soon as available**¹. Links to studies on known options can be found in Dr. Lyons-Weiler’s article cited below, and information about a broad range of protective therapeutics is available from many sources. There are options for everyone.

There is growing concern that social-distancing alone is not enough. China utilized both distancing and therapeutics and have brought their cases under control in a remarkably short period of time. We appreciate all the hard work Public Health has been doing, but we are afraid that without greatly increasing therapeutic interventions, the outbreak could go on for many months.

We have ties with a national community of health practitioners and scientists who focus on therapeutics for prevention and healing, and who are actively participating in or following the most current science. In this unprecedented and difficult time, we offer our help.

Sincerely,

The Board and members of *Informed Choice WA*

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¹ <https://www.dailywire.com/news/report-plasma-therapy-showing-excellent-results-against-coronavirus>

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