



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

April 12, 2021

Elizabeth Brehm
Siri & Glimstad
200 Park Ave
17th Floor
New York, NY 10166
Via email: foia@sirillp.com

Dear Ms. Brehm:

This letter is our final response to your Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of February 19, 2021, assigned #21-00731-FOIA, for the attached request.

We located 7 pages of responsive records. After a careful review of these pages, no information was withheld from release.

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of the records provided, please contact either our FOIA Requester Service Center at 770-488-6399 or our FOIA Public Liaison at 770-488-6277.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Andoh".

Roger Andoh
CDC/ATSDR FOIA Officer
Office of the Chief Operating Officer
(770) 488-6399
Fax: (404) 235-1852

21-00731-FOIA

From: Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD)
Sent: Wed, 27 Jan 2021 22:19:03 +0000
To: John Gregory
Subject: RE: Comment on change to CDC's vaccine-autism page

Hi John,

Thanks for reaching out.

In the fall of 2020, as part of routine website updates to ensure consistent website formatting, CDC updated its page on vaccines and autism. Recently this change has been misinterpreted on social media and among some organizations as a change in CDC's position. CDC is and has always been clear on this subject: vaccines do not cause autism. This headline has been added back to our website to ensure there is no confusion around CDC's position.

Thanks,
Kristen

From: John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2021 12:00 PM
To: Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) <hok4@cdc.gov>; Media@cdc.gov (CDC) <sohco@cdc.gov>
Cc: Grusich, Katherina (Kate) (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) <yhb3@cdc.gov>; Zeikel, Chandra (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) (CTR) <qvj4@cdc.gov>
Subject: Re: Comment on change to CDC's vaccine-autism page

Kristen,

I now see the page has been updated again: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>

I'm trying one last time, since it's been six days without a statement -- are we going to get some sort of statement from someone at the CDC explaining why these changes were made to the vaccine/autism page on CDC.gov and whether it was the result of any legal action by the Informed Consent Action Network, as the group claims on its website?

https://www.icandecide.org/ican_press/the-cdc-finally-capitulated-to-icans-legal-demands-and-removed-the-claim-that-vaccines-do-not-cause-autism-from-its-website/

If we're not going to get a statement today, let me know that so we can say the CDC declined to comment.

On Tue, Jan 26, 2021 at 3:44 PM John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com> wrote:
Wanted to make sure I get an update on this. When can we expect a response from the CDC regarding these claims?

On Tue, Jan 26, 2021 at 8:49 AM John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com> wrote:
Any update on this, Kristen?

On Fri, Jan 22, 2021 at 9:37 AM Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) <hok4@cdc.gov> wrote:
Hi John,

I've reached out to the program to get more on this.

Thanks,
Kristen

From: John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com>
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2021 10:34 AM
To: Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) <hok4@cdc.gov>; Media@cdc.gov (CDC) <sohco@cdc.gov>
Subject: Re: Comment on change to CDC's vaccine-autism page

Hi Kristen,

When can we expect a response on this? This claim is gaining major traction on social media.

On Thu, Jan 21, 2021 at 3:04 PM John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com> wrote:
Sorry, forgot to attach a screenshot of ICAN's newsletter.

On Thu, Jan 21, 2021 at 3:03 PM John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com> wrote:
Hi Kristen,

The nonprofit Informed Consent Action Network sent out an email this afternoon claiming credit for CDC removing the claim that "vaccines do not cause autism" from its website.

This is based on changes that were made in August 2020 to the CDC's page on vaccines and autism. Far as I can tell, the only change made to the page was the title. It previously read "Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism" and now reads "Vaccines and Autism."

The old version: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200730095354/https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>

The current version: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>

ICAN described the change this way in its email: *"On the heels of the foregoing, and dozens of related demands regarding autism that ICAN continued to press, in the dead of the night, and without any fanfare or announcement, on August 27, 2020, the CDC website removed the claim that 'Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism' from its website! The CDC had finally capitulated to the truth!"*

How should this change to the CDC page on vaccines and autism be interpreted? Any comment on ICAN's claims here would be helpful.

--

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From: John Gregory
Sent: Fri, 15 Jan 2021 09:54:09 -0600
To: Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD)
Cc: Grusich, Katherina (Kate) (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD); Zeikel, Chandra (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) (CTR)
Subject: Re: Question on COVID vaccine misinformation that cites CDC

Thanks Kristen, that's very helpful.

One follow-up: what are some other examples of vaccines that do not completely prevent infection, but do prevent disease, like the current COVID-19 vaccines?

On Thu, Jan 14, 2021 at 9:42 PM Nordlund, Kristen (CDC/DDID/NCIRD/OD) <hok4@cdc.gov> wrote:

Hi John,

Thanks for reaching out. None has claim on the definition of a vaccine and there is no legal definition. There are many ways to define it, but CDC describes a vaccine as a product that stimulates a person's immune system to produce immunity to a specific disease, protecting the person from that disease.

mRNA vaccines are a new type of vaccine to protect against infectious diseases. To trigger an immune response, many vaccines put a weakened or inactivated germ into our bodies. That's not the case for mRNA vaccines. Instead, they teach our cells how to make a protein—or even just a piece of a protein—that triggers an immune response inside our bodies. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

I think it's helpful to know that researchers have been studying and working with mRNA vaccines for decades. Interest has grown in these vaccines because they can be developed in a laboratory using readily available materials, meaning the process can be standardized and scaled up, making vaccine development faster than traditional methods of making vaccines.

A couple of facts about mRNA vaccines:

- They cannot give someone COVID-19 because mRNA vaccines do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19.
- They do not affect or interact with our DNA in any way because mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept. The cell breaks down and gets rid of the mRNA soon after it is finished using the instructions.

We have a page about mRNA vaccines where a lot of this information is as well:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/mRNA.html>.

Thanks,
Kristen

Kristen Nordlund

CDC Public Affairs
p. 404.639.7387 | c. 404.956.0336 | e. hok4@cdc.gov

PS – the website that you have linked in your email is censored. When I tried to click on it our systems labeled it ‘extremism’.

From: John Gregory <john.gregory@newsguardtech.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 10:44 AM
To: Reed, Jasmine (CDC/OD/OADC) <pvz1@cdc.gov>
Cc: Media@cdc.gov (CDC) <sohco@cdc.gov>
Subject: Question on COVID vaccine misinformation that cites CDC

Hi again Jasmine,

This is John Gregory again, health editor at NewsGuard.

In our work identifying potential misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine, we've come across this claim from an alternative medicine proponent named David Martin, who claimed the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines do not meet the CDC and FDA's definition of vaccines.

Here's the relevant quote:

"This is not a vaccine. This is an mRNA packaged in a fat envelope, that is delivered to a cell. It is a medical device designed to stimulate the human cell into becoming a pathogen creator. It is not a vaccine. Vaccines actually are a legally defined term, and they're a legally defined term under public health law, they're legally defined term under the CDC and FDA standards. And a vaccine specifically has to stimulate both an immunity within the person who is receiving it, but it also has to disrupt transmission. And that is not what this is. They have been abundantly clear in saying that the mRNA strand that is going into the cell, it is not to stop transmission. It is a treatment."

The full video can be viewed here: https://www.bitchute.com/video/6xu20c1_url/

I'm aware of no such definition that requires a vaccine to stop transmission in order to be called a vaccine. Can the CDC explain why the mRNA vaccines do fit the definition of a vaccine? Any other comment addressing this man's claim would also be helpful.

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