Title:

Questioning the evidence for vaccinating against *Bordetella pertussis* in Australia

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Abstract:

This research investigates the effectiveness of vaccinating against *Bordetella pertussis* in order to prevent whooping cough in the Australian population. By 1950 whooping cough in Australia was considered a common but non-serious disease in the adult population. It is a disease caused by three species of bacteria but the vaccine only protects against one – *Bordetella pertussis*. Ninety percent of mortality occurs in children under 6 months and children are not protected until three doses of vaccine have been administered- *over 6 months.* Fully vaccinated children still get whooping cough. In order to evaluate if this vaccine is effective it is important to know the percentage of hospitalized cases that are vaccinated. Children under 6 months represent the most serious cases of this disease. The incidence of this disease in the Australian community declined as social conditions improved. Incidence, mortality and morbidity data are affected by changes in surveillance and case definitions. An accurate measure of harm caused by the vaccine is unknown. This disease is rarely serious in children older than one and natural infection in childhood confers long-term immunity that is not provided by the vaccine. Hence whooping cough is now a more serious disease in adolescents and adults. The risk /benefit for this vaccine should be re-evaluated using Australian data as surveillance and social conditions vary between countries.