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CBC Ombudsman
P.O. Box 500 Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5W 1E6

To the Attention of: Esther Enkins, CBC Ombudsman
ombudsman@cbc.ca

Dear Ms. Enkins

I'm writing to register a formal complaint about the lack of journalistic integrity, accuracy, and honesty by the Canadian Broadcast Corporation. In particular I wish to bring to your attention the blog written by CBC News commentator Bob McDonald entitled – '**Science Trumped By Belief**' (January 20, 2017).
www.cbc.ca/news/technology/science-trump-belief-1.3944523

While Mr. McDonald is entitled to his opinions, it is irresponsible journalism to make blatantly dishonest and deceptive statements. Such dishonesty does a disservice to the public and undermines the integrity of the CBC as an honest purveyor of the truth. Mr. McDonald makes a number of inaccurate and dishonest statements that require retraction and correction.

*"If you don't read the newspapers, you are uninformed.
If you do read the newspapers, you are misinformed."
- Mark Twain*

Dishonest Labeling

Mr. McDonald's dishonesty begins with referring to Mr. Robert Kennedy Jr. as a "vaccine skeptic": "*Trump . . . is said to be considering putting together a commission on vaccine safety and scientific integrity, headed by Robert Kennedy Jr., a known vaccine skeptic.*" The evidence does not support this statement.

Mr. Kennedy has clearly stated he supports the childhood vaccination program. He admits to having fully vaccinated his six children. Nowhere in his public statements has Mr. Kennedy advocated against vaccinations.

Mr. Kennedy has, however, been very critical about the lack of credible evidence of the safety of the current vaccine program, and the conflicted interests within the Vaccine Safety Division of the CDC. A more accurate descriptor of Mr. Kennedy's position relative to vaccines would be "vaccine safety critic" or "vaccine safety advocate".

Labeling individuals who express concern about vaccine safety, effectiveness, or necessity as "vaccine skeptic" is clearly meant to distort the discussion and over simplify a critical and complex issue. Such biased journalism would be obvious were McDonald to refer to those expressing concern about the safety of a particular automobile as "automobile skeptic". Such labeling is disingenuous and dishonest.

In other public debates over controversial issues, (e.g. abortion rights) the CBC treats the two perspectives with a degree of respect, allowing each to name their movement (pro-choice and pro-life). The movement that is raising concerns about the safety of the current vaccine schedule is typically neither pro or anti vaccination. Rather this movement is characterized by a commitment to safeguarding the right of Canadians to make voluntary and well-informed decisions about health care, and demanding independent and verifiable scientific evidence of the safety of the vaccine program.

False Statements About Vaccine Safety

McDonald is also being dishonest when he states: *"Many parents are still refusing vaccines for their children because they believe they are harmful, even though there is no evidence to support it."* The evidence does not support this statement.

There are known risks to all drugs. To suggest that all vaccines are safe, without any qualifiers, is dishonest and deceptive. To claim: *"there is no evidence"* that vaccines cause harm is simply untrue.

There is a substantial body of evidence that vaccines are not safe for some, and maybe many children. Is Mr. McDonald not aware of the US National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program that was created in response to the significant injuries caused by vaccines? Since 1986 this program has awarded more than 3.3 billion dollars in compensation to victims of vaccine injury, including permanent disability and death. This amount represents a fraction of the documented injuries caused by vaccines.

Vaccine can't be considered "safe" when a national vaccine injury compensation program has been established to compensate those injured by vaccines. In fact,

Canada is the only G7 Nation without a vaccine injury compensation program. Canada is the outlier here by not providing compensation to victims of vaccine injury. Not having a vaccine injury compensation program does not mean there is no vaccine injury in Canada.

Mr. McDonald also seems unaware that a 2011 US Federal Court ruling deemed vaccines “*unavoidably unsafe*”. Vaccines can’t be both “safe” and “unavoidably unsafe”.

Mr. McDonald also seems unaware, or chooses to ignore, that the vaccine industry has been forced to withdraw numerous vaccines because of the significant injuries and harm these vaccines have caused. This includes the swine flu vaccine, whole cell DPT vaccine, MMR vaccine, and the oral polio vaccine (OPV), among others.

Vaccine Choice Canada has written an extensive report on Canada’s dual reporting system on vaccine adverse events. This report should be of concern to every journalist in this country: <http://vaccinechoicecanada.com/wp-content/uploads/Vaccine-Safety-Report-2-20B29E.pdf>

False Statements About Dr. Wakefield

McDonald makes a number of false statements about Dr. Wakefield: *“In the case of vaccines causing autism, it all began in 1998 from a single article published in the prestigious journal The Lancet by Andrew Wakefield that stated the vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella was linked to a rise in autism among children.”* The evidence does not support this statement.

It is clear Mr. McDonald has never read Dr. Wakefield’s Lancet paper and is simply regurgitating false statements promulgated by a captured and compliant media. Had Mr. McDonald actually read the Lancet paper he would have discovered that Dr. Wakefield never claimed the MMR vaccine causes autism. McDonald has not done his research on this matter or fact-checked his statements.

Andrew Wakefield’s paper was a case study that investigated a consecutive series of 12 children with chronic enterocolitis and regressive developmental disorder. <http://www.wellwithin1.com/WakefieldOriginalPaper.pdf>

Wakefield’s own statement in the Lancet paper is: *“We did not prove an association between measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine and the syndrome described.”* Wakefield concluded that: *“Further investigations are needed to examine this syndrome and its possible relation to this vaccine.”*

Dr. Wakefield did recommend parents use the single dose vaccines for measles, mumps and rubella, rather than the triple virus shot (MMR), until the risk was better understood. This is hardly the pronouncement of an “anti-vaxxer”. It was the

UK government's decision to withdraw the license for the single vaccines, and Merck's decision to stop production in the US and Canada that gave parents no option but to accept the triple virus MMR vaccine or not vaccinate.

It is clear the government's intention was the protection of the triple virus vaccine rather than the protection of our children. Any reduction in the rate of measles, mumps and rubella immunization is the responsibility of the UK government and Merck. Blaming Dr. Wakefield is dishonest. Ironically, the UK government withdrew the MMR vaccine in 1992 following demonstration of increased risk of aseptic meningitis 15-35 days after vaccination.

<https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/165/6/704/63700/Risks-of-Convulsion-and-Aseptic-Meningitis>

The findings of Dr. Wakefield in the Lancet paper were never debunked as many media pundits claim. Dr. Wakefield's finding of a relationship between bowel disease and regressive developmental disorders has been replicated by dozens of laboratories around the world and this relationship is now accepted medical science. http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/130/Supplement_2/S160

False Statements About the Vaccine-Autism Link

Mr. McDonald makes a false statement about a vaccine-autism link:

"Trump is one of those people who still believes in the link even though there is no evidence to support it." McDonald seems unaware, or willfully chooses to ignore the following:

A report in the **Pace Environmental Law Review Journal** reviewed 83 cases of vaccine-induced brain injury that resulted in an autism diagnosis, which were compensated by the U.S. Federal vaccine injury compensation system.

<http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/pelr/vol28/iss2/6>

There are now more than 128 independent studies that show a relationship between vaccines and autism. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/220807175/128-Research-Papers-Supporting-the-Vaccine-Autism-Link>

Dr. William Thompson, a Senior Scientist with the Vaccine Safety Division of the CDC took whistleblower status in 2014 and revealed CDC scientists colluded to commit scientific fraud in order to obscure the link between the MMR vaccine and autism. Dr. Thompson was the lead statistician and co-author of the 2004 CDC study that is used to deny a link between the MMR vaccine and autism.

Dr. Thompson claims the federal agency ordered he and his colleagues to destroy study findings showing a link between the MMR vaccine and autism. Representative Bill Posey read Dr. Thompson's statement into the Congressional record.

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4546421/rep-bill-posey-calling-investigation-cdcs-mmr-reasearch-fraud>

This alarming disclosure is the basis of the 2016 documentary **Vaxxed: From Cover-Up to Catastrophe**, which the media has actively tried to censor.

Award-winning journalist, Sharyl Attkisson, has investigated the vaccine-autism link. Attkisson compiled an extensive list of studies that show a vaccine-autism link. (**What the News Isn't Saying About Vaccine-Autism Studies** – updated November 27, 2016). <https://sharylattkisson.com/what-the-news-isnt-saying-about-vaccine-autism-studies>

Attkisson concluded –

*“The body of evidence on both sides is open to interpretation.
People have every right to disbelieve the studies on one side.
But it is disingenuous to pretend they do not exist.”*

Ms. Attkisson’s comment applies directly to McDonald. Mr. McDonald has every right to disbelieve the studies on one side of the debate. But to state there is no evidence showing a vaccine-autism link is more than disingenuous. McDonald is being intentionally dishonest with the express purpose of misleading the public. It is unfortunate the CBC doesn’t have investigative journalists of the integrity of Ms. Attkisson.

Dr. Bernadine Healy, the former head of the National Institutes of Health, has stated that the [vaccine-autism link was not a “myth”](#). Dr. Healy disclosed that her colleagues at the Institute of Medicine did not wish to investigate the possible link between vaccines and autism because they feared the impact it would have on the vaccination program.

There is an abundance of evidence that a vaccine-autism link exists. It can hardly be claimed that there is “no evidence” as McDonald states. Anyone who makes this claim is not being honest. McDonald seems to recognize that science works because “It is self-correcting, building on the knowledge of those who went before.” Yet, McDonald advocates for closing off to new information and evidence about vaccine safety as it emerges. McDonald seems more committed to preserving medical dogma than in finding out the truth.

Willful Blindness and Callous Disregard

In his blog, McDonald shows willful blindness and callous disregard for those individuals whose lives have been destroyed by vaccine injury: “*But the belief that the link exists is still in the public mind because it has been carried on by non-scientists such as Hollywood actors and conspiracy theorists.*”

While Mr. McDonald's intention, one would assume, is to protect children from serious illness, McDonald's concern and compassion appears not to extend to children injured by vaccines. McDonald appears to be of the position that vaccine injured children are acceptable casualties and that we can, and should, willfully ignore any harm that is being caused by vaccines.

This is not science. This is not compassion. This is not responsible journalism. This is not honesty. This is thinly disguised disdain of vaccine-injured individuals. This is callous and inhuman behavior for an Officer of the Order of Canada.

*"You may choose to look the other way,
but you can never say again that you did not know."
- William Wilberforce*

Responsible Journalism

If the Canadian Broadcast Corporation is genuinely interested in being purveyors of responsible journalism pertaining to vaccines, I suggest they commit to the following:

1. Respect and Preserve Our Legal Rights and Freedoms

The CBC has a responsibility to respect and preserve the Canadian Charter rights to fundamental freedoms of conscience and religion, the legal right to security of the person, and the medical right of informed consent, not erode them. The CBC has a responsibility to inform readers, rather than suppress and deny them access to information.

2. Recognize All Children Are Important

The CBC needs to recognize that all children are important. Currently there is a noticeable absence of concern for vaccine-injured children. A vaccine-injured child is just as important as an immuno-compromised child who is the justification for imposing vaccinations against one's will. The CBC needs to advocate for the health of all Canadians, not just for some.

3. Tell the Truth About Vaccine Safety Data

The CBC needs to tell the truth about the current status of the vaccination experiment including the fact that we have no way of knowing whether the long term benefits of vaccination outweigh the risks because adequate clinical research on the long-term safety and effectiveness of the current vaccine program does not exist. No large-scale study comparing the total health outcomes of vaccinated vs. unvaccinated children has ever been done.

This statement is supported by the 2013 vaccine review conducted by the prestigious Institute of Medicine. The IOM found numerous vaccine safety science gaps including: *“Although the committee identified several studies that reviewed the outcomes of studies of cumulative immunizations, adjuvants and preservatives, the committee generally **found a paucity of information**, scientific or otherwise, that addressed the risk of adverse events in association with the complete recommended immunization schedule . . . studies designed to examine the long term effects of the cumulative number of vaccines or other aspects of the immunization schedule **have not been conducted.**”*

<http://www.nvic.org/PDFs/IOM/2013researchgapsIOMchildhoodimmunizationschedulea.aspx>

It is essential this research be conducted, and the CBC ought to be strong advocates for ensuring this research takes place.

4. Admit Their Bias

If the CBC has a political conflict of interest in the matter of vaccine policy, or receives revenue from the pharmaceutical/medical industry, the CBC needs to declare this conflict of interest each and every time they report on vaccine issues.

5. Relevant Journalism

We challenge the CBC to be more responsible to victims of vaccine injury, be thorough in their research, learn the facts, honestly challenge the claims made by the pharmaceutical/medical industry, demand evidence, and be a force for truth, health, and choice in Canada. We owe it to the children who have been vaccine injured to find the truth.

6. Respectful Labeling

The CBC needs to treat the two perspectives on the vaccine issue with the same degree of respect. A first step would be to allow each side to name itself. The movement advocating for informed consent and vaccine safety ought to be referred to as **“Advocates for Informed Consent”** or **“Advocates for Vaccine Safety”**. Calling this movement *“anti-vaccine”* is dishonest. Calling these individuals *“conspiracy theorists”* is disrespectful and needs to stop.

Support Vaccine Safety

Rather than celebrate the creation of an independent ‘Vaccine Safety and Science Integrity Commission’, Mr. McDonald and the CBC resist such accountability. The vaccine industry is the only industry, other than the nuclear industry, that is not legally responsible for the safety of their products. This has created a dangerous situation made even more dangerous by the efforts of government and industry,

supported by mainstream media, to erode our medical and Charter rights to informed consent.

If the current vaccine program is based upon sound and credible science, there is nothing to fear. If, however, vaccine science is “tobacco science”; is fraudulent and based upon deception, distortion, corruption and conflicted interests, those who promulgate this fraud, including Mr. McDonald, **need to be held accountable**.

The CBC is not living up to its responsibility to be accurate, fair, honest and transparent. Instead, the CBC is complicit in the harm that is being done to our children. Rather than show courage, curiosity, compassion, honesty, and a genuine commitment to scientific inquiry, the CBC seem to have no interest in being honest brokers of medical information as pertains to vaccination.

It appears the CBC has been captured by medical dogma and the financial influence of the pharmaceutical/medical industry, and, as a result, has become little more than a medical industry-marketing tool.

For the sake of all of our children, we need the CBC to honour its own principles that guide journalistic integrity. They could begin by printing this letter on the CBC website.

“No democracy can survive when most of the media has a sole commitment to profit with little consideration for the public good.”

- Thom Hartmann

Sincerely,

Ted Kuntz, Parent of a Vaccine Injured Child
Vice President of Vaccine Choice Canada

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