

From: Margaret Supel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, 28 September 2015 1:22 PM
To: SARC; Lizzie Blandthorn
Subject: No Jab, No Pay policy

Hi,

I understand the No Jab, No Pay policy is being proposed and is currently before the parliament. I would like to express my objection to this policy as I believe it is in breach of a number of rights and is unethical in nature. Whilst there is much media attention and medical emphasis to the importance of vaccination, I believe as politicians, it is your role to implement policies that are fair, sensitive to the rights of all citizens including minorities who may object to vaccination for religious, health, ethical or conscientious reasons. Parliaments role is to protect rights. It is concerning when policies are increasingly being introduced and are impinging on the rights of individuals to make informed decisions.

This policy is financially punitive and discriminatory and will not actually improve the health of Victorian children. Parents who do not vaccinate are mostly very loving and well informed and will not vaccinate simply to receive entitlements. This policy will increase the number of families who will not enrol their children into childcare or kindergarten because they are opposed to the conditions of this policy. I believe this policy is contravening the Victorian Human Rights Charter which provides individuals with the right to make a free and informed consent and the Australian government's vaccine handbook which states that consent must be voluntary and without "undue pressure, coercion or manipulation".

As a health professional, tax payer and mother I am deeply concerned by this policy and the negative impact it will have on our society. Having a family friend whose child was severely disabled following 4yr old vaccinations and a colleague whose child died the night of receiving 18 month old vaccinations- the pain of these families cannot be ignored. Although we are assured that these types of reactions are rare, these families-believing they were doing the right thing for their previously healthy children have to live with the consequences of their decision. Where there is a risk, no matter how slight, there must be a choice and families should not be penalised for their decision. The government is not there to dictate what is right for the individual family. Our society has managed to get to 2015 without this policy, so why introduce it now? Most families will still choose to vaccinate and if the vaccines are working, these families have nothing to fear of the minority who are not vaccinating. Evidence has shown, that even if rates of vaccination are 100%, illness will still occur. Some people, through no fault of their own cannot seroconvert which means their body will not produce antibodies to the vaccine. Policies should focus on improving education, awareness and access to good health as that will be more effective at improving the health of our children, not financially and socially discriminating against those who do not vaccinate. It is interesting to note that children that may be HIV positive or have a blood borne virus, have their rights and privacy protected yet vaccination status is quickly becoming a war zone amongst our community.

May you look at all the advantages and disadvantages and make a decision that will be in the best interests of ALL victorian families.

Kind regards,

Margaret Supel