

UK press correction regarding *Cervarix*

12 October 2009

GSK was notified by the UK's Department of Health on 28 September of the death of a 14 year old girl, Natalie Morton, who was vaccinated with GSK's cervical cancer vaccine, *Cervarix*, as part of the national HPV immunisation programme. On 29 September the UK local health authority, NHS Coventry, released a statement to provide further details related to the death of Natalie, who died shortly after receiving a vaccination with *Cervarix*. It stated that preliminary post mortem results have shown she had a rare serious underlying medical condition, which was likely to have caused her death. They also state that it is 'unlikely' the HPV vaccination was the cause of death. However, further test results and a final report will not be available for some time.

Following the news, a large volume of negative coverage appeared in the UK media on Sunday 4 October. In particular, the Sunday Express published an article entitled "*Jab 'as deadly as the cancer'*" which was inaccurate and highly misleading. The article (now removed from the Express website) gave the impression that our *Cervarix* vaccine may be riskier and more deadly than the cancer it is designed to prevent. As a result, GSK contacted the Editor and the following correction article appeared in yesterday's (11 October) edition of the Sunday Express:

Cervarix – Correction

"Last Sunday we incorrectly suggested that the cervical cancer vaccine Cervarix could be as deadly as cervical cancer and that the vaccine is ineffective.

We now accept that there is no evidence to suggest that this is the case and that Cervarix in fact provides protection against the viruses that cause 70% of cervical cancers.

We are happy to set the record straight and apologise for causing undue alarm to all those women and teenage girls considering vaccination against cervical cancer."

In addition to the Sunday Express correction, two separate articles have been published in the British Medical Journal ([*'Cervarix: definitely not the new MMR'*](#)) on 7 October and in Saturday's (10 October) Guardian newspaper ([*'Sunday Express cancer jab story denied by expert'*](#)). Both articles support our position.