EVIDENCE BASED GUIDELINES

FOR

VACCINATION PRACTICE

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MEDICINE, JUNE 2008
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DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and except for the work on the ventrogluteal site (dimensions and tissue composition) and the whole cell pertussis vaccine site comparative study which were submitted for a Masters in Family Medicine (Monash) 1998, has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other Institution.

Ian Cook
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my wife, Barbara, who has shared my vision for best patient care at the point of service and whose support has made this work possible.

I wish to acknowledge the support of colleagues Professor Dimity Pond, University of Newcastle and Professor John Murtagh, Monash University who helped to facilitate the studies reported in this thesis. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dale King and Michelle Williamson, Mayne Health Diagnostic Imaging, Taree, and Bettie Hollis, Mayne/Hampson Pathology, Taree. I would also like to thank Professor Edgar Marcuse, Seattle, for his encouragement.

I would also like to thank Professor Dimity Pond and Dr Parker Magin for providing constructive comments on drafts of this thesis.

Finally, I wish to thank the patients, and parents of patients, who took part in the thesis studies, their willingness to undertake ultrasonography, blood testing and to present for analysis of vaccine adverse effects has allowed for valid conclusions to be drawn from clinical studies.
SUMMARY

Vaccination programs have been so successful that concerns about sequelae of vaccine preventable disease have been replaced by concerns about the safety of vaccines. This context mandates the development and use of the best vaccines and the best vaccination practice (site and route of administration of vaccines).

Evidence based medicine has been championed as a way of improving the quality of medical care.

Assessment of vaccination guidelines from twelve countries, nine states/provinces and two counties reveals that recommendations for vaccination practice are largely based on expert opinion.

In this thesis, clinical studies are presented on:

- The preferred route for administration of vaccines (intramuscular or subcutaneous).
- The needle length required for intramuscular injection.
- The technique for intramuscular injection of vaccines.
- The site for intramuscular injection of vaccines

These studies have resulted in the following publications in refereed journals:

1. Cook IF, Barr I, Hartel G, Pond D, Hampson AW. Reactogenicity and immunogenicity of an inactivated influenza vaccine administered by
intramuscular or subcutaneous injection in elderly adults. Vaccine 2006; 24: 2395-402.


These studies allow evidence based guidelines to be formulated for vaccination practice which should help to maintain public confidence in vaccination programs by minimizing the adverse reactions of vaccines whilst maintaining their efficacy.

It is noteworthy in this context that some recommendations made in this thesis have been translated into Australian Government policy in the 9th edition of “The Australian Immunisation Handbook” 2008, albeit a long time after their publication.

This work also raises questions about contemporary clinical practice and identifies sex as a determinant of immune response and adverse reaction with some vaccines. Further studies in the area of vaccination practice and sex-difference in immune response to vaccines are suggested.