

Vaccine-Autism Researcher Indicted for Fraud

SILVER SPRING, MD, April 18, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ —CoMeD— Based on last week's [indictment](#) of vaccine-autism researcher Dr. Poul Thorsen for money laundering and mail fraud, the [Coalition for Mercury-free Drugs](#) (CoMeD), a Maryland-based non-profit organization, is calling for further investigation related to the incident.

Thorsen, a Danish scientist, has already been [cited for academic misconduct by Aarhus University](#) in Denmark and is now [charged with embezzling a \\$1 million grant for autism](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For several years, Thorsen was involved in influential studies defending the controversial use of Thimerosal (about 50% mercury by weight) as a preservative in several vaccines.

Thimerosal has been [linked to autism](#) and other [neurological diseases](#) by numerous [studies](#). Dr. Paul G. King, Scientific Advisor for CoMeD, explains, "We need to consider the ever-growing body of toxicity studies linking the mercury in Thimerosal to severe neurological deficits, like autism, and to immune-system and mitochondrial damage. Such studies have shown that the level of [Thimerosal in vaccines is not safe](#)."

As [U.S. Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said](#), "Grant money for disease research is a precious commodity. When grant funds are stolen, we lose not only the money, but also the opportunity to better understand and cure debilitating diseases."

According to CoMeD, U.S. health agencies have relied upon these now questionable Danish studies to sanction the use of Thimerosal. CoMeD registered its concerns about Thorsen and his influence on these studies in a groundbreaking [letter](#) to Daniel R. Levinson, Inspector General the Department of Health and Human Services on September 15, 2010. An international community of researchers and advocates signed onto the CoMeD letter.

Now, CoMeD is calling for an independent investigation into the scientific validity of all Danish vaccine-autism studies conducted during Thorsen's tenure and into the possible inappropriate involvement of employees at the CDC. Further, CoMeD is calling for the retraction of the 2004 Institute of Medicine report rejecting the causal relationship between Thimerosal and autism, which relied upon the Danish studies in which Thorsen participated.

CoMeD seeks to restore the public confidence in vaccination programs by banning the use of mercury-based compounds in vaccines and other medicines. Despite CoMeD's efforts, the U.S. continues to license and recommend Thimerosal-preserved vaccines for use in the U.S. and the rest of the world. The World Health Organization, with the strong support of [Bill Gates of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#), continues to distribute Thimerosal-preserved vaccines in the developing world.

Rev. Lisa K. Sykes, President of CoMeD, expects the recent charges against Thorsen to serve as a turning point in the debate over Thimerosal: "In addition to the charges against Dr. Thorsen, the [United Nations is drafting a treaty](#) to reduce mercury exposure, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is reconsidering the use of mercury in dental fillings. I'd say its past time to reevaluate the legality, as well as the soundness, of injecting a Thimerosal-preserved vaccine into anyone."

