

Patient Rights and Doctor Ethics Hand In Question

Name: Key

A mother has decided not to vaccinate her baby at any of the required vaccination ages (2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 4 years, etc), she is concerned about the implications of vaccinating being connected with the onset of autism. The only study that ever made this connection was found to be fraudulent years ago and has been retracted. There are some risks involved in vaccines; there is very low incidence of some health issues and allergic reaction. However, in order for vaccination to be effective in a population it is important that a high proportion of the population is vaccinated (herd immunity).

- a. What is the patient's (and by proxy, mother's) rights, in this scenario?

Consent to medical treatment

Right to Privacy

- b. What should the doctor's course of action be, taking into consideration autonomy, beneficence, and maleficence?

Autonomy: Respect the mother's decision

Beneficence: Provide the mother information (proof) of the safety to the baby + importance of herd immunity

Non-maleficence: Suggest she get a 2nd opinion
: provide name for 2nd opinion

- c. What are the personal harms/benefits, to the baby? Also, what effect does this decision have on the family, local community, and society?

Baby → Benefits ↗ no triggering of the disease
↘ no allergic reaction
↳ Harms → risk of getting disease

Others → put at a higher risk, especially immune compromised