

We Can Eradicate Cervical Cancer!



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Inspire2Live has been created to empower people to convert the sense of powerlessness, caused by cancer, into one of strength. Inspire2Live is founded on the absolute belief that one can attain the greatest possible satisfaction by putting their heart and soul into helping others. Its motto is "Never, ever quit!"

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Scientific knowledge eradicated smallpox, a painful and disfiguring disease which killed 300 million people in the 20th century alone. In case anyone has skimmed over this feat of moral greatness, let me say it again: Scientific knowledge eradicated smallpox, a painful and disfiguring disease which killed 300 million people in the 20th century alone.

This is a quote from Steven Pinker in his book 'Enlightenment Now!' A brilliant book about progress. We have eradicated smallpox and we can eradicate cervical cancer. We only need to vaccinate girls and boys against the human papillomavirus infection. We will see that after two or three decades this type of cancer will be gone. Like smallpox are gone. Like many diseases are gone. **So why don't we do it?**

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Vaccination Objectors

There is objection against vaccination. Because of religious reasons, because some people do not trust government and because some think science is just an opinion. However, when we start working on awareness, vaccination and explain that science is not 'just an opinion' but based on hard work, facts and knowledge, we can convince the greater part and start working on successes.

Lack of Awareness / Stigma

Awareness is also important because this type of cancer is mostly spread through sexual behaviour and there is a certain amount of shame. Awareness campaigns help. Inspire2Live wants to work with organisations like Dance4Life to help eradicate cervical cancer. Dance4Life works with girls and boys and through dance makes them aware of the consequences of sexual behaviour.

Financial Costs

Money is also a reason. Especially in the low and middle income countries. Therefore, we need to help. In Africa every year almost 80.000 young women die of cervical cancer and there are more than 100.000 new cases annually. We cannot accept this. We have to bring vaccines to these countries. We can do this by providing the vaccines or by training these countries produce the vaccines by themselves.

"It is a moral topic, not a financial one. We cannot let these young women die."

When I suggested this for COVID-19 vaccines: 'Why not give it for free?' I was laughed away on social media and received responses like: "Do you work for nothing? Industry needs money as well." While I agree that industry absolutely needs money, I think we should also be aware that industry has often done nothing on the R&D part of making vaccines, but is now making a lot of money off of that science. Industry is good in the production and distribution of vaccines. When we can combine the money for production (from taxpayers and industry) and have industry produce and distribute the vaccines, we can eradicate cervical cancer. When we pay a little more in the more developed countries and industry accepts a little less profit, we have the margin for vaccination in low and middle income countries.

It is a moral topic, not a financial one. We cannot let these young women die. When we work on awareness, better knowledge about the value of vaccination and let government and industry work together in the production and distribution, we have done a human act: we saved our fellow citizens lives.

Submitted by: Dr. h.c. Peter Kapitein, Patient Advocate at Inspire2Live

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