

**AUTHOR'S REPLY**

Dear Sir,

I would like to thank Drs Cooper and Skinner for their letter to the Editor<sup>(1)</sup> commenting on my editorial published in the September 2008 issue of the Singapore Medical Journal.<sup>(2)</sup> The letter explains that human papillomavirus (HPV) is an infectious agent, that the vaccination leads to herd immunity, and argues why vaccination against HPV should be made mandatory. The letter has taken a lead from two sentences in the third paragraph of the editorial,<sup>(2)</sup> and discusses various aspects of HPV vaccination.

The editorial had debated the possible implications of any future policy for the mandatory vaccination for any vaccine.<sup>(2)</sup> However, I would like to add that the focus of the editorial was not on whether HPV vaccination should be made mandatory. The authors of the letter probably misunderstood the point and in so doing, prepared an advocacy piece for mandatory HPV vaccination.<sup>(1)</sup>

I agree with the authors on the first paragraph; however, the rest of the letter (paragraphs 2–5) is not related to the editorial and the points made are very much independent of the editorial. In my opinion, the points made in paragraphs 2–5 do not make much scientific sense as the authors have raised a few questions and responded to them subsequently. This does not follow the ethical principles in scientific publishing. In any case, I thank the authors for pointing out the possible semantic misreading of the two sentences in my editorial, and agree that they should be understood/read appropriately. The rest of my arguments provided in my editorial still stand accurate.

Yours sincerely,

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**REFERENCES**

1. Cooper SC, Skinner R. Clarifying the importance of HPV vaccination. Singapore Med J 2009; 50: 841-2.
2. Lahariya C. Mandatory vaccination: is it the future reality? Singapore Med J 2008; 49:661.