

# s: who really benefits?



will end up seeing other  
or future care of their  
conditions. This indicates  
plan for these patients is a  
time and money, except for  
who did the care plan.  
patient has a genuine  
medical condition, his regu-  
has the responsibility to  
referral for a particular spe-  
allied health worker for  
ted care.  
re Medicare can trust a GP  
and select suitable patients  
for Medicare-funded co-  
care. We don't need item  
721 and 723 for these

basic services. If we remove these  
items, Medicare would save mil-  
lions.

**Dr Tom Sivapalan**  
Ringwood, Vic

## Have your say

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sender's title, address and  
daytime phone number. Letters  
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than 250 words and may be  
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## Flu vax push defies science

**EDITOR** With this year's influenza  
immunisation program having started, the  
Federal Government continues to promote  
the vaccines and provide them free for  
certain groups. NSW Health recommends  
annual flu vaccination "for any person aged  
≥6 months who wants to protect themselves  
from influenza".

But does it work? Cochrane reviews  
evaluating flu vaccines have concluded:

- The available evidence is of poor quality  
and provides no guidance regarding the  
safety, efficacy or effectiveness of influenza  
vaccines for people aged 65 years or older.
- In children under two, the efficacy of  
inactivated vaccine was similar to placebo.
- The preventive effect of parenteral  
inactivated influenza vaccine on healthy  
adults is small.
- The protection against influenza-like illness  
given by inactivated influenza vaccine to  
pregnant women is uncertain or at least  
very limited; the effect on their newborns is  
not statistically significant.

And why does the Department of Health  
claim that the flu vaccine "can be safely  
given during any stage of pregnancy" when  
even the Product Information for this year's  
trivalent vaccine states that "the safety  
of Fluorix when administered to pregnant  
women has not been evaluated"?

The government should stop wasting  
taxpayers' money on flu vaccines, and base  
all public health decisions on the highest  
quality scientific data.

**Dr Peter Lewis**  
Manly, NSW

References available on request.

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miracles  
for the  
cancer



is expected of their children in  
regards to vaccination.

**Dr Lou Lewis**

**IS very real danger**