

**Administration of incorrect vaccine to child  
16HDC01125, 26 May 2017**

*Registered nurse ~ Medical centre ~ Immunisation ~ Right 4(1)*

A woman took her son to a medical centre for his 15-month immunisations. In accordance with the New Zealand National Immunisation Schedule, the child was to receive Act-HIB, M-M-R II and Prevenar 13.

A registered nurse (RN) selected the vaccines from the medical centre's refrigerator prior to the child's appointment. However, she mistakenly selected Infanrix-IPV instead of the Act-HIB vaccine.

The RN asked another RN to check the vaccines; however, the second RN failed to identify the error. The first RN then administered the Infanrix-IPV vaccine to the child instead of Act-HIB.

After giving the vaccines, the RN looked at the child's computer immunisation record and Well Child book, and realised her mistake. She conveyed this information to the family and the appropriate health professionals.

**Findings**

By failing to identify and administer the correct vaccine, the first RN did not provide services to the child with reasonable care and skill. Accordingly, she breached Right 4(1).

By failing to check the vaccines against the appropriate immunisations for the age of the child and identify that the Infanrix-IPV vaccine had been selected mistakenly, the second RN failed to provide services to the child with reasonable care and skill. Accordingly, she breached Right 4(1).

The medical centre did not take all such steps as were reasonably practicable to prevent the acts and omissions of the RNs that breached the Code. Accordingly, the medical centre is vicariously liable for the RNs' breaches of Right 4(1).

**Recommendations**

It was recommended that each RN provide a written apology to the family for her breach of the Code.

It was also recommended that the medical centre provide training to medical staff on its revised Childhood Immunisation Policy, audit its compliance with the Childhood Immunisation Policy, and use this case as an anonymised case study for the education of future medical staff employed by, or contracted to, the medical centre.