



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Inspector General
Office of Investigations

Memorandum

JUL 19 2004

The Reverend Lisa Karen Sykes
3604 Milbrier Place
Richmond, Virginia 23233

Dear Reverend Sykes:

This letter is in response to your April 3, 2004 correspondence, which arrived at our office from Mr. Kenneth M. Donohue, acting in his capacity as Chairman of the Investigations Committee, President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE). In his letter to this office, Mr. Donohue expressed concern over your allegation that Thimerosal is being used "in order to increase the manufacturer's profit margins." Such an allegation goes to perceived wrongdoing, and in that capacity, Mr. Donohue requested that this office provide a second review and take whatever action we deem appropriate.

Upon review of the correspondence you provided to the PCIE, in conjunction with further research into the matter, we have determined that your above allegation represents a potential conflict-of-interest issue which may be criminal in nature and therefore falls within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Investigations' (OI) authority to investigate.

Accordingly, we are forwarding a copy of your information to Mr. Patrick Doyle, Special Agent in Charge of our Philadelphia Regional Office, for his review and appropriate action. Mr. Doyle is responsible for investigations in Washington, D.C., which is headquarters to many of the HHS agencies having responsibility over vaccine safety. Mr. Doyle can be reached via correspondence at the following address: HHS/OIG/OI, P.O. Box 40029, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

We are deeply committed to ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of all the programs of HHS and appreciate that you also share this concern. We thank you for bringing this matter to our attention and hope this adequately responds to your concerns. Should you have any questions, you may contact Matt Kochanski of my staff. Mr. Kochanski is Director of the Investigative Branch for OI and can be reached at (202) 619-2954.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Little
Deputy Inspector General
for Investigations

cc: Mr. Kenneth M. Donohue, PCIE