

# Can You Trust the WHO With COVID-19 Pandemic Response?

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<https://youtu.be/KYDX2MncpKk>

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- The WHO's influenza pandemic plan, devised in 1999, was heavily influenced by the drug industry
- The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) questioned the WHO's handling of the 2009 swine flu pandemic, saying its recommendation to stockpile antivirals and vaccines wasted public funds
- PACE concluded there was "overwhelming evidence that the seriousness of the pandemic was vastly overrated by WHO," and that the drug industry had influenced the organization's decision-making
- There's other evidence suggesting the WHO is acting as little more than a Big Pharma front group. For example, a 2019 congressional report concluded Purdue Pharma had influenced WHO's opioid guidelines
- Only 25% of WHO's funding comes from member states. The remaining 75% comes from voluntary contributions. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – the investments of which include junk food manufacturers, alcohol and drug retailers – is the biggest funder

The World Health Organization is a specialized agency of the

United Nations established in 1948 to further international cooperation for improved public health conditions. It was given a broad mandate under its constitution to promote the attainment of “the highest possible level of health” by all peoples.

You might recall that WHO released a statement in September 2019 that they had worked with Facebook to curb vaccine “misinformation” and usurp free speech and accountable democracy in America.<sup>1</sup>

In this article, I will show you that the WHO is beyond conflicted, and because of its existing funding fails to complete its initial mandate. Worse, WHO serves its corporate masters and essentially is destroying, not improving, the health of world.

### **The 2009 Swine Flu Pandemic – A WHO Vaccine Fiasco**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that from April 12, 2009, to April 10, 2010, there were 60.8 million cases, 274,000 hospitalizations, and 12,469 deaths (0.02% infection fatality rate/mortality rate) in the United States due to the H1N1 (swine flu) virus.

June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic of novel influenza A (H1N1).<sup>2</sup> A vaccine was rapidly unveiled, and within months, cases of disability and death from the [H1N1 vaccine](#) were reported in various parts of the world.

In the aftermath, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) questioned the WHO’s handling of the pandemic. In June 2010, PACE concluded “the handling of the pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), EU health agencies and national governments led to a ‘waste of large sums of public money, and unjustified scares and fears about the health risks faced by the European public.’”<sup>3</sup>

## WHO Acted Like a Pharma Front Group

Specifically, PACE concluded there was “overwhelming evidence that the seriousness of the pandemic was vastly overrated by WHO,” and that the drug industry had influenced the organization’s decision-making. As noted in a PACE press release:<sup>4</sup>

*“The Assembly ... set out a series of urgent recommendations for greater transparency and better governance in public health, as well as safeguards against what it called ‘undue influence by vested interests.’*

*It called for a public fund to support independent research, trials and expert advice, possibly financed by an obligatory contribution of the pharmaceutical industry. It also called the media to avoid ‘sensationalism and scaremongering in the public health domain.’”*

Apparently, we learned nothing from that fiasco. Disturbingly, while the WHO was found to have had serious conflicts of interest with the drug industry, nothing has actually changed since then, which makes one wonder whether the WHO’s COVID-19 pandemic response can actually be trusted. As reported by the Natural Society in 2014:<sup>5</sup>

*“... a joint investigation by the British Medical Journal (BMJ) and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (BIJ) has uncovered some serious conflicts of interest between the World Health Organization (WHO), who proposed ... heavy vaccinations, and the pharmaceutical companies which created them.*

*The joint-investigation’s report explains that the WHO profited immensely<sup>6</sup> from the scare tactics they utilized to promote the use of a swine flu vaccine. Creating mass*

*hysteria was the WHO's emergency advisory committee's goal ... The WHO told the world that up to 7 million people could die without the vaccines they were pushing ...*

*The advisory panel was choked with individuals highly connected to the pharmaceutical companies with vested interests in both antiviral and influenza vaccines.*

*An over \$4 billion stake was invested in developing these vaccines, and without a pandemic there would be no use for them. Utilizing propaganda and fear, the drugs were pushed on unsuspecting people, and the money was made."*

## **Why the Secrecy Around WHO's Advisers?**

The joint investigation, led by BMJ features editor Deborah Cohen and journalist Philip Carter, was published in January 2010 in the BMJ Clinical Research journal. In it, Cohen and Carter pointed out that:<sup>7,8</sup>

*"Key scientists advising the World Health Organization on planning for an influenza pandemic had done paid work for pharmaceutical firms that stood to gain from the guidance they were preparing. These conflicts of interest have never been publicly disclosed by WHO ...*

*Evidence ... raises troubling questions about how WHO managed conflicts of interest among the scientists who advised its pandemic planning, and about the transparency of the science underlying its advice to governments.*

*Was it appropriate for WHO to take advice from experts who had declarable financial and research ties with pharmaceutical companies producing antivirals and influenza vaccines?*

*Why was key WHO guidance authored by an influenza expert who had received payment for other work from Roche, manufacturers of oseltamivir, and GlaxoSmithKline, manufacturers of zanamivir?*

*And why does the composition of the emergency committee from which Chan sought guidance remain a secret known only to those within WHO? We are left wondering whether major public health organizations are able to effectively manage the conflicts of interest that are inherent in medical science."*

## **WHO's Pandemic Plan Was the Product of the Drug Industry**

As explained by Cohen and Carter,<sup>9</sup> wrongdoing at WHO began 10 years before the swine flu pandemic, in 1999 – the year WHO drew up its influenza pandemic plan. The authors detail the conflicts of interest inherent in that document, so for a more complete picture, I suggest reading through their full analysis.<sup>10</sup>

In summary, the pandemic plan was prepared by WHO employees in collaboration with the European Scientific Working Group on Influenza (ESWI), a working group consisting of "key opinion leaders in influenza" that is "funded entirely by Roche and other influenza drug manufacturers." One of ESWI's stated roles is to lobby politicians, Cohen and Carter notes.

Two of the six WHO employees had also participated in Roche sponsored events the year before. Two of the ESWI scientists had also worked on Roche marketing materials, and both were "engaged in a randomized controlled trial on oseltamivir supported by Roche" at the time the pandemic plan was written. None of these conflicts of interest were disclosed in the pandemic plan document.

Even more suspicious, that oseltamivir trial "remains one of

the main studies supporting [oseltamivir's effectiveness](#) – and one that was subsequently shown to have employed undeclared industry funded ghostwriters,” Cohen and Carter write,<sup>11</sup> adding the ESWI's policy plan for 2006 through 2010:

*“... specifically stated that government representatives needed to ‘take measures to encourage the pharmaceutical industry to plan its vaccine/antivirals production capacity in advance’ and also to ‘encourage and support research and development of pandemic vaccine’ and to ‘develop a policy for antiviral stockpiling.’*

*It also added that government representatives needed to know that ‘influenza vaccination and use of antivirals is beneficial and safe’ ... In the meantime, in Roche's own marketing plan, one goal was to ‘align Roche with credible third party advocates.’ They ‘leveraged these relationships by enlisting our third-party partners to serve as spokespeople and increase awareness of Tamiflu and its benefits.’”*

In December 2009, WikiLeaks also released a cache of documents<sup>12,13,14,15</sup> leaked from a pharma trade group that revealed how the WHO Expert Working Group on R&D Financing had been very open to industry lobbying, thus allowing the drug industry to influence WHO's policy decisions on drug research.

### **WHO Parrots Purdue Pharma's False Opioid Marketing**

There's other evidence suggesting the WHO is acting as little more than a Big Pharma front group. For example, just last year, in 2019, the report,<sup>16</sup> “Corrupting Influence: Purdue & the WHO,” produced by U.S. Reps. Katherine Clark (D-Mass.) and Hal Rogers (R-Ky.), concluded [Purdue Pharma](#) had influenced WHO's opioid guidelines.<sup>17,18</sup> The executive summary of “Corrupting Influence” reads, in part:<sup>19</sup>

*“In 2017, several members of Congress sent a letter to the WHO warning that Purdue Pharma L.P. (Purdue) was attempting to expand their drug sales to international markets using the same fraudulent marketing tactics that instigated the opioid crisis in the United States.*

*We expressed our concern that Purdue’s expansion could trigger an opioid crisis on a global scale. When the WHO failed to respond to the letter, we began to question why they would remain silent about such a significant and devastating public health epidemic. The answers we found are deeply disturbing.”*

The report details how WHO, both in its 2011 adult guidance and its 2012 pediatric guidance, parroted Purdue’s false claims that [opioid dependence](#) “occurs in less than 1% of patients,” and that “if prescribed in accordance with established dosage regimens, are known to be safe and there is no need to fear accidental death or dependence.”

Remarkably, in its 2012 opioid guidance for children with cancer pain, WHO claims “there is no maximum dosage of strong opioids like OxyContin for children,” Clark and Rogers note. “The WHO published this claim despite the fact that U.S. public health agencies have found that fatal overdoses skyrocket in adult patients who are prescribed above 90 morphine milligram equivalents (MME) per day,” Clark and Rogers write, adding:

*“The web of influence we uncovered, combined with the WHO’s recommendations, paints a picture of a public health organization that has been manipulated by the opioid industry ... If the recommendations in these WHO guidelines are followed, there is significant risk of sparking a worldwide public health crisis.”*

## **Calls for Reformation of WHO After Ebola Crisis**

The WHO was also heavily criticized for its lack of leadership during the 2013 through 2015 [Ebola outbreak](#) in West Africa. It took five months before WHO declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern, which “undoubtedly contributed to the unprecedented scale of the outbreak,” according to an academic assessment published in 2017.<sup>20</sup>

Two separate reports published in 2015 highlighted the WHO’s failures, one issued by a panel of independent experts commissioned by WHO itself,<sup>21</sup> and one by an independent group of 19 international experts convened by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and the Harvard Global Health Institute.<sup>22</sup>

While the WHO is recognized as being uniquely suited to carry out key functions necessary in a global pandemic, the LSHTM and Harvard Global Health Institute experts point out that the WHO has by now lost so much trust that radical reforms will be required before it will be able to assume an authoritative role.

*“WHO’s failings on ... core functions during the Ebola outbreak have now produced an existential crisis of confidence ... Donors have earmarked voluntary contributions, effectively controlling nearly 80% of WHO’s budget by 2015. The result is an organization that seems to have lost its way.*

*Although the budget has more than doubled from US\$1.6 billion in 1998–99 to US\$4 billion in 2012–13, the organization itself controlled an ever-shrinking share. One casualty of recent decisions was WHO’s reduced ability to control cross-border disease outbreaks, a core task for which it was created in 1948 ...*



*Confidence in the organization's capacity to lead is at an all-time low. Calling for additional staff or a larger budget will not address this. WHO must find a way to prioritize what it does, and regain its credibility, independence, and legitimacy to perform its core functions.*

*Breaking out of this 20-year impasse will demand clear commitment and a different kind of leadership by WHO to implement fundamental reforms under a tight timeline ..."*

## **Who Funds the WHO?**

As reported in the January 2016 issue of Pharmaceutical Technology,<sup>23</sup> only one-quarter of WHO's funding comes from member states. The remaining 75% comes from voluntary contributions, and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is the biggest funder. Its donations even exceed those of any individual member state.

The Gates Foundations involvement with WHO is of particular interest at this time. In a Washington Times opinion piece,<sup>24</sup> published March 31, 2020, Gates calls for the complete shutdown of all U.S. states and quarantining of all Americans "until the case numbers start to go down ... which could take 10 weeks or more."

While Gates can undoubtedly afford it, few working-class Americans would be able to survive without income for months on end. And, considering the mortality rate of COVID-19 is now believed to be similar to the flu, which is around 0.1%,<sup>25</sup> shutting down society for several months really doesn't seem warranted, unless there's something else going on that we don't know about.

## **Strange Investments and Conflicts of Interest**

In March on Friday the 13th, 2020, Gates resigned from the

Microsoft board to focus on philanthropic ventures, including global health.<sup>26</sup> Most likely, much of his attention will be funneled toward The Gates Foundation.

In 2017, a long list of public interest, health and citizens' groups sent an open letter<sup>27</sup> to the executive board of the WHO, criticizing the organization's proposal to admit The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as an external actor into "official relations" with the WHO and its governing body, the World Health Assembly.<sup>28</sup> According to the letter:

*"According to the United States Government's Securities and Exchange Commission, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Trust endowment – the source of revenue for the Foundation – is heavily invested in many of the food, alcohol, and physical inactivity-related consumer products that cause or treat the current crisis of preventable heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes. Gates Foundation Trust direct investments include:*

- *Coca-Cola regional company that operates in the Americas south of the U.S. (\$466 million),*
- *Walmart (\$837 million), the largest food retailer in the U.S. and a leading retailer of pharmaceutical drugs and alcoholic beverages,*
- *Walgreen-Boots Alliance (\$280 million), a large multinational pharmaceutical drug retailer, and*
- *Two of the world's largest TV companies (screen-time): Group Televisa (\$433 million) and Liberty Global PLC (\$221 million).*

*In addition, approximately one-quarter of the Gates Foundation Trust assets are invested in Berkshire Hathaway Inc., a holding company that owns a US\$17 billion share in the U.S.-based Coca-Cola company and US\$29 billion interest in Kraft Heinz Inc., another of the world's ten largest food*

*companies.*

*These investments make the Gates Foundation a beneficiary of sales of several categories of products that are the subject of WHO standards and advice to governments related to nutrition and physical activity.”*

The signatories also urge member states to fund WHO adequately so as to prevent the organization from having to rely on donations from actors that have a heavy stake in food, drug and alcohol companies.

While the Gates Foundation has been a “two-entity structure” since 2006,<sup>29</sup> where the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation distributes money and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Trust manages assets and investments, conflicts of interest are still clearly visible, making the claim that the two are completely separate a hard sell.

In 2017, India’s National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI) severed its ties with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. According to India Times,<sup>30</sup> “There were questions about the Gates Foundation’s ties with pharmaceutical companies and the possible influence this may have on the country’s vaccination strategy.” The Indian Health Ministry confirmed that the NTAGI would from there on be fully funded by the central government instead.

If nothing else, Gates himself is likely to have some clue as to where the money is being invested, and therefore can steer the Foundation’s activities in a direction that will ultimately benefit and make money for the Gates Foundation Trust.

## **WHO’s Relationship With China Under Scrutiny**

WHO’s handling of the current COVID-19 pandemic has also come

under increasing scrutiny. A February 16, 2020, CNN article<sup>31</sup> highlights WHO director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus' "effusive" praise over China's response to the outbreak in Wuhan City, despite evidence suggesting Chinese officials had "sought to downplay and control news about the virus, even threatening medical whistleblowers with arrest."

*"The WHO's praise of China's response have led critics to question the relationship between the two entities. The UN agency relied on funding and the cooperation of members to function, giving wealthy member states like China considerable influence.*

*Perhaps one of the most overt examples of China's sway over the WHO is its success in blocking Taiwan's access to the body, a position that could have very real consequences for the Taiwanese people if the virus takes hold there.*

*The WHO's position regarding China has also renewed a longstanding debate about whether the WHO, founded 72 years ago, is sufficiently independent to allow it to fulfill its purpose," CNN reports.<sup>32</sup>*

In the final analysis, it seems doubtful that WHO is sufficiently independent to safeguard public health around the world. The drug industry has no lesser influence over WHO today than it did in 2009 when PACE outed the organization as being unduly influenced by vested interests.

Back then, WHO pushed countries around the world to invest in antivirals and [swine flu vaccines](#) with poor efficacy and safety. Today, we have Gates, a key funder of WHO, calling for a 10-week or longer shutdown of the U.S. and the rapid building of brand new vaccine manufacturing facilities to handle the manufacturing of billions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine. Who benefits and who loses by the implementation of

those two recommendations? Think about it.

## **Tell Dr. Bershteyn to Start Testing Zinc to Prevent COVID-19**

Dr. Anna Bershteyn, an assistant professor at NYU Grossman School of Medicine is overseeing a [trial of hydroxychloroquine](#), a popular anti-malarial drug, to determine if it can prevent COVID-19.

Many doctors are reporting [significant success](#) by adding zinc to the protocol but Dr. Bershteyn's trial does not include it. Even worse, she is using Vitamin C [as a placebo](#), this virtually guarantees that the drug will fail in trials and ensure that there is more demand for a vaccine.

Please email Dr. Bershteyn TODAY and let her know to start incorporating Zinc into her hydroxychloroquine trials immediately as it [is a zinc ionophore](#) and if successful could save many lives.

[Email Dr. Bershteyn](#)