

Abstract

This paper explores 20 scholarly, peer-reviewed articles that discuss various ethical concepts that support mandatory human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination for public school entry. The HPV vaccine has been controversial in nature since its debut in 2006. Scientifically speaking, this immunization is sound; it has an extremely high efficacy with next to no side effects and is dramatically reducing HPV-associated cancer rates. However, the ethical factors that play into this controversy also deserve consideration. Though ethics undoubtedly contain “grey areas”, there are many defined ethical concepts, principles, and theories that we rely on to make political, professional, and personal decisions. The following research synthesis subjects the HPV vaccine to various ethical concepts including the rule of double effect, beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice, utilitarianism, and deontology. Hence, the philosophical nature of the vaccine is used to determine its legitimacy as opposed to its empirical attributes. Looking at the HPV vaccine from these ethical standpoints garners further support for its mandatory implementation and underscores its admirable potential for public health outcomes.