



## Protecting polio vaccination staff and helping them do their job

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Polio vaccinators play a key role in vaccinating children across the world, facilitating access to vaccination, and administering the vaccine to those eligible everywhere.

To carry out this noble service, they endure massive and multiple hardships and expose themselves to dangers, especially in war zones and troubled regions. Many of them have died while performing this noble task as a result of some people's failure to understand those individuals' real job. Some others do their jobs while being subject to unwarranted insults and assaults.

It is therefore important to protect those people who serve humanity, do good and protect children from potential evil and harm.

It is obligatory upon the residents of areas where vaccination is carried out and the beneficiaries of this great service to protect and care for vaccination staff with all love and interest in this task, to provide them with the necessary assistance and to defend them against any assault. It is also necessary to protect them from any forms and sources of harm because this is the way to pay back for a favor in Islam. Allah says in the holy Quran: "Shall the recompense of goodness be anything other than goodness?". <sup>(1)</sup> It is not acceptable for a Muslim to recompense goodness with affront. This is not the ethic of a Muslim. Muslims

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<sup>(1)</sup> Surat Ar-Rahman [verse 60]

recompense goodness with goodness even if the other didn't do any good to them. So, think about those who do goodness by delivering vaccinations and administering them to children to protect them from diseases.

It is incumbent upon Muslims to provide all care, protection and guidance to the vaccinators, especially as they may perform this service in remote areas away from transport and cities, where some of them go to children in forests and hard-to-reach areas.

Citizens everywhere should be truthful about whether or not their children have been vaccinated. They must say this transparently and clearly, so that vaccinators can conduct statistics and ascertain the scope of benefit and response to vaccination campaigns.

It goes without saying that truthfulness is one of the most important morals of Muslims. Muslims must not lie, as lying is a sign of hypocrisy. The Prophet says in this hadith: "There are three signs of a hypocrite: When he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he betrays his trust." (2)

And whoever claims that his children were vaccinated when they were not is considered a liar because he was untruthful and betrayed the duty entrusted in him of caring for his children. The Prophet says in a hadith: "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your subjects.... The man is a guardian of his family and is responsible for his subjects..." (3)

Those who refuse to vaccinate their children and lie and claim that they have been vaccinated will be committing a grave sin as a result of wasting their offspring by not vaccinating them. The Prophet says: "Neglecting one's own dependents is a reason enough for a man to commit a sin". (4)

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(2) Narrated by Muslim

(3) Narrated by al-Bukhaari, hadith no. 2419.

(4) Narrated by Abu Dawood, hadith no. 1445.

Given the importance and urgency of vaccination and the grave consequences of lying in the performance of this duty, it is permissible to mark those who have been vaccinated to distinguish them from those who have not, especially in schools and places where children gather such as tribes. This can be done by coloring a finger of the child vaccinated to make sure all children are vaccinated.