



Pharmaceutical companies behind appeal to Swiss Federal Council for monkeypox vaccines

Description

Because the monkeypox vaccination is not yet available in Switzerland, queer organizations are now collecting signatures to petition the government. Has the Swiss health authority underestimated the situation?

The Swiss queer organization *Checkpoint Zurich* distributed a picture showing Swiss Health Minister Alain Berset with monkeypox. However, behind the organization are pharmaceutical companies.

That monkeypox particularly affects men who have sex with men, is denied by *Checkpoint Zurich*. “Mr. Berset, monkeypox can affect anyone.” The health center for queer people is currently [demanding](#) that Alain Berset, the Swiss Minister of Health act because according to them, the situation is serious.

The World Health Organization declared an international health emergency over the weekend. In the canton of Zurich, 101 cases have been registered; in Switzerland there are 234 cases.

Checkpoint Zurich has urged the population to send an email to the Swiss Federal Councillor and Health Minister Berset with the following wording:

“I demand that you get the smallpox vaccine (Imvanex) for Switzerland now. Please make it possible for people who want to be vaccinated to have access to the smallpox vaccine as soon as possible.”

The implication is that the Federal Health Authority [Bundesamt für Gesundheit] (BAG) has not done enough to prevent the spread of the disease.

However, the media has not been reporting that *Checkpoint Zurich* is connected to pharmaceutical companies. The organization is managed in cooperation with the Center for Addiction Medicine ARUD, which in turn has the Swiss Association for the Medical Management in Substance Users (SAMMSU) as a partner. In the years leading up to 2016, SAMMSU was co-funded by pharmaceutical companies Roche, Gilead, and AbbVie, while 2021's only listed sponsor was ViiV Healthcare.

ViiV Healthcare turns out to be the front organization of various pharmaceutical companies. It emerged from a partnership between GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Pfizer in 2009. In 2012, the Japanese company Shionogi joined.

Almost all of the organization's leadership positions are held by current or former GSK executives. For example, Deborah Waterhouse has been CEO of ViiV Healthcare since 2017 and a member of the Executive Committee of GSK since 2020.

The required vaccine Imvanex is currently the only monkeypox vaccine approved in the EU. The vaccine has not yet received approval in Switzerland. It is manufactured by the Danish company Bavarian Nordic, which also has offices in Switzerland, in Zug. And Bavarian Nordic cooperated with GlaxoSmithKline until 2019. However, Henrik Juuel, CFO of Bavarian Nordic, made it known that he would be available for contract production.

There are other connections between the two companies. For example, the CEO of Bavarian Nordic, Gerard van Odijk, was Senior Vice President of GSK Northern Europe until 2005. And the vice president of Bavarian Nordic, Jean-Christophe May was vice president and general manager of GSK Puerto Rico until 2012.

A search on Researchgate also showed that one of the leading co-authors in scientific studies of the Bavarian Nordic CEO Paul Chaplin is Alfred von Krempelhuber from GSK Germany.

Pharmaceutical companies are putting pressure on society and the authorities through front organizations in order to steer them in a certain direction – to the taxpayer's vault.

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featured image: Homosexuals launch a petition with a picture showing Swiss Health Minister Alain Berset with monkeypox. Behind the organization are pharmaceutical companies. Photo: Instagram

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