

Neoliberalism kills

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:15 pm

As the [Guardian notes](#) in a mail this morning:

Before a vaccine for measles was created, there were regular epidemics that caused approximately 2.6 million deaths worldwide each year. In England, the year before the vaccine was introduced in 1968, there were 460,000 cases of measles - by the 1980s that number had dropped to about 10,000 suspected cases a year.

To drive home the importance of getting protected from this highly contagious infection, the government implemented a national vaccination campaign in 1994 - the impact was immediately felt. There have been no measles epidemics since 1995 and in 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared England [measles-free](#). So, how, in just seven years, is measles back at the top of the health agenda?

I offer three reasons.

First, the memory of measles has been lost.

Second, people are totally selfish and think it's for others to provide immunity, not them.

And third, since 2017 we have had governments that have sided with the totally selfish. We have only had to see their attitude to Covid, which is now one of outright denial and refusal to accept the need for vaccines to appreciate that.

Neoliberalism kills. It's as simple as that.