

OFCOM COMPLAINT - Headliners on GB News - 26 September 2024

Programme details

Programme title: Headliners

Date of broadcast: 26 September 2024

Time of broadcast (24 hour clock): 23:33

Channel / station*: GB News

Your complaint

Subject: GB News broadcast dangerous and harmful anti-vaccine narratives, accusing Dr Anthony Fauci of being a “murderer”, claiming that ventilators killed COVID patients and that NHS vaccines kill people. This violated Ofcom rules 7.1 and 2.2.

Description: Guest Lewis Schaffer claimed that during the pandemic people were dying because “you were plugging them into ventilators and killing them” and said “why are they dying? Because you're killing them, anybody who takes a COVID vaccine.” Host Nick Dixon agreed and asked why the NHS are texting him to get the flu vaccine. Schaffer responded “because they want you dead”, to which Dixon agreed. This breaches Rule 2.1 that states the requirement of “adequate protection for members of the public from the inclusion in such services of harmful and/or offensive material”. The claim that vaccines kill has a reasonable likelihood of causing harm by influencing viewers' health decisions. Schaffer also labelled Dr Anthony Fauci “a murderer” and Sir Chris Whitty a “poor man's Dr. Fauci”. This violates Rule 7.1, which requires fair treatment of individuals. It is particularly serious considering the death threats received by Whitty and Fauci during the pandemic. Dixon laughed, claiming it was satire and apologised, but this excuse is inadequate in light of the circumstances. At the end, after a message from a producer, Dixon contradicted his earlier comments stating “someone is telling me [...] many people think [vaccines] are safe, is that right? [...] That’s my view and the view of GB News: they save lives.” After repeatedly failing to counterweigh the deadly vaccine claims, this correction was insufficient, leaving the audience unprotected from harmful material and risking public harm.