Ethical Issues in Pandemic Influenza Planning

Activities of the CDC Public Health Ethics Committee

Drue H. Barrett, Ph.D.
Public Health Ethics Coordinator
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Public Health Ethics at CDC:

- Still an emerging area at CDC
- Have spent much of the last several years
  - Building infrastructure/capacity/demand
  - Building relationships
  - Providing advice/guidance/consultation
Public Health Ethics Goals

- Foster an environment and culture that supports and develops ethical practices throughout the organization.
- Increase awareness, knowledge, skills, and confidence in identifying, analyzing, and addressing public health ethics issues.
- Integrate the tools of ethical analysis into day-to-day operations across CDC.

CDC Public Health Ethics Infrastructure

- Ethics Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee to the Director, CDC
- CDC Public Health Ethics Committee (PHEC)
Pandemic Influenza

- **Pandemic Vaccine**
  - likely unavailable during the first wave of a pandemic

- **Antiviral medications**
  - Quantities
  - Distribution logistics
  - Efficacy / Resistance

- **Social distancing and infection control measures**

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Pandemic Influenza Ethical Guidance

**Primary Authors:**
Robert Levine – Yale University
Kathy Kinlaw – Emory University

- Allocation of Scarce Resources
- Use of Liberty Limiting Interventions

http://www.cdc.gov/od/science/phec/guidelinesPanFlu.htm
CDC Pandemic Influenza Ethics Guidance

- Equity in allocation of resources
- Balancing competing rights and interests
- Maximizing voluntariness and minimizing mandatory policies
- Choosing the least restrictive alternatives
- Importance of global cooperation and collaboration

CDC Pandemic Influenza Ethics Guidance

- Scientific evidence should form basis for public health measures
- Public engagement and involvement
- Commitment to transparency
- Informing, educating, and communicating with the public
- Avoiding discrimination based on arbitrary selection criteria
Fair Procedures

- Consistency across people and time
- Impartial and neutral decision makers
- Adequately reasoned decisions based on accurate information
- Ensuring those affected by decisions have a voice in decision-making and agree to the proposed process in advance
- Process for appeals
- Procedures that are sustainable and enforceable

Guidance for Ventilator Distribution

- Example of how to implement the general ethical framework described in the original pandemic influenza document.

- Address the tension between obligation to provide care and to be a good steward of resources while protecting the common good in scarce resource situations.
Ethical Guidance for Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response

Primary Authors:
Bruce Jennings, Center for Humans and Nature
John Arras, University of Virginia

To be published-special supplement of MMWR:
■ Introductory paper prepared by CDC staff
■ Guidance Document
■ 5 focus papers written by leading ethicists

5 Focus Papers

▪ Research during public health emergencies
  Alex Jon London, Carnegie Mellon University

▪ Vulnerable populations
  Madison Powers, Georgetown University

▪ Justice, resource allocation, and stockpiling
  Norman Daniels, Harvard School of Public Health

▪ Professional, civic, and personal obligations
  Angus Dawson, Keele University

▪ Community consultation
  Ruth Gaare Bernheim, University of Virginia
Engaging in Public Health Ethics at CDC: Consultation Process

**Phase 1: Identify**
1. Identify the issue and gather information
2. Identify stakeholders and their values
3. Clarify question

**Phase 2: Analyze**
4. Evaluate information
5. Consider ethical perspectives
6. Critically weigh all factors

**Phase 3: Resolve**
7. Identify alternative
8. Weigh options
9. Develop recommendation

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Public Health Ethics Consults

- Expedited Partner Therapy
- MMRV vaccine
- Smallpox vaccine strategy
- Returning mental health survey data
CDC Emergency Operations
Center Ethics Desk

Exercises:

– Pandemic Influenza
– TOPOFF-4
– Anthrax
– Hurricane

Responses:

– H1N1

Infrastructure Development

– Training
  □ Seminars
  □ Web-based Public Health Ethics Course
  □ Development of case studies

– Survey of CDC staff

– Public Health Ethics Consortium
For Information About CDC’s Public Health Ethics Activities Please Contact

Drue H. Barrett, Ph.D.
Public Health Ethics Coordinator
DBarrett@cdc.gov