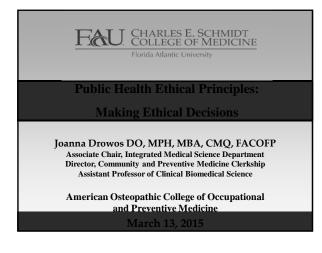
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Session Objectives

- Consider the natural ethical tensions underlying public health practice
- Review seven ethical principles with specific relevance to public health practitioners
- Apply ethical principles to an example of a public health situation requiring a decision

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

FAU

FACING ETHICAL DECISIONS

- o What constitutes a good and bad choice?
- o What do we value?
- o Trade-offs?
- o What are our "norms"?



Beyond Medical Ethics

Public Health:

Balancing and coming to conclusions about the rights and duties of individuals, communities, populations and governments with regard to protecting and maintaining health

FAU

What do we understand about ethics?

"Rules are often inadequate to cover complex situations at times they come into conflict, and they are frequently difficult to interpret or apply. Broader ehtical principles will provide a basis on which specific rules maybe formulated, criticicised and interpreted"

The Belmont Report, Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the

FAL

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Seven Ethical Principles

Non-Maleficence

- PRIMUM NIL NOCERE!
- o Omit harmful activities
- Occasions where degrees of harm are 'traded off' against the possibilities of greater harms or benefits

Benificence

- Obligation to produce benefit
- Physicians heal and help patients according to abilities and judgment
- Active contribution to welfare of others

ent MM Roltri J. Okosun IS. Acad Med 2004

FAL

Seven Ethical Principles

Health Maximization

- Seeks health of broader constituency of the public, and health improvements
- Produce benefit in a wider sense, obligation is social beneficence
- Maximize health in the population you are responsible for

Efficiency

- More health needs than resources – worldwide lack of resources
- Use evidence-base and performance of costbenefit analysis to decide what should be done and how to do it
- Complex beyond effectiveness

FAU

Seven Ethical Principles

Respect for Autonomy

- Respect for the wishes of the individual patient served
- Every person has a high value, cannot overlook for the good of another
- If restricting autonomy for wider public health goals, burden of proof on those advocating for restriction

Justice

- All have equal moral worth fairness
- Equal treatment, health opportunities, and distribution of health outcomes 'health equity'
- Health of all citizens protected as much as possible – burden of proof when unequal treatment

FAU

Seven Ethical Principles:

Proportionality

- Weighing and balancing individual freedom against wider social goods proportionally
- Public health benefits outweigh infringed general moral considerations



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Apply to an example:

- o Health Department Leader of Communicable Disease Control of State X
- Head of government asks whether exemptions for measles immunization should be eliminated (only medical)
- o 2 children dies in recent outbreak
- o Insufficient immunization rates (1st dose 70%, 2nd dose 60%)
- o Will take her advice seriously

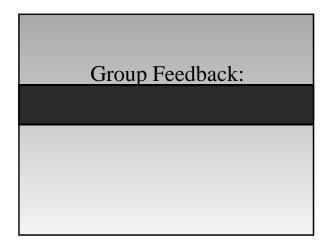
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Principles Checklist:

- o What are ethical challenges within this case?
 - Look at each principle on the handout and consider whether it is a challenge in this case.
- o *Schroder-Back et al. 2014

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Principles Checklist/Memory Aid

Adapted from:

Schroder-Back et al. **Teaching seven principles for public health ethics: towards a curriculum for a short course on ethics in public health programmes.** *BMC Medical Ethics.* 2014, 15:73

Non-Maleficence

Will no one be harmed by the proposed intervention? Are children and vulnerable populations especially protected?

Beneficence

Is the intervention of any good to every single person taking part?

Do benefits outweigh harms – either by intervening or not intervening?

Health Maximization

Is intervention effective and evidence based?

Does the intervention improve population health?

Does it have a sustainable, long-term effect on public health?

Is there added value to the community?

Efficiency

Is the proposed intervention cost-effective? Awareness of scarcity of public money (use saved for other purpose)

Respect for Autonomy

Does the intervention refrain from using coercion and manipulation? Does the intervention foster free choice? Is informed consent required to participate in the intervention?

Is self-responsibility demanded and possible for every person?

Are privacy and personal data respected?

Does the intervention avoid paternalism, (if needed is it justified)? Does the intervention promote autonomy?

Justice

Does the intervention avoid stigmatizing, discriminating against or exclude any sub-population (from social benefits or health care)? Is the supporting institution publicly justified and transparent?

Are social and health inequities exacerbated or improved?

Are social and health inequities exacerbated or improved?

Are vulnerable sub-populations considered and supported?

Is equality of opportunity and participation in social action promoted?

Is there an erosion of social cohesion and solidarity?

Proportionality

Does the intervention avoid infringing on possible alternatives? Are costs and utility proportional?

Steps of Applied Ethical Reasoning

Adapted from:

Schroder-Back et al. **Teaching seven principles for public health ethics: towards a curriculum for a short course on ethics in public health programmes.** *BMC Medical Ethics.* 2014, 15:73

- 1. Identify and frame in your own words: What is underlying moral conflict?
- 2. Identify and frame in ethical words: Which ethical principles are relevant, how can they be specified and might they be in conflict to each-other?
- 3. Delve deeper in to issues: Do I have all relevant information? Can I get more background information to understand all particularities?
- 4. Are alternative solutions feasible with less moral issues/costs?
- 5. Further specification: Do the specifications change with more information?
- 6. Weighing priorities: Are conflicting principles and their specifications of equal value?
- 7. Conclusions drawn: Following specification and weighing, which solution is preferred?
- 8. Integrity: Can I personally accept the conclusion drawn?
- 9. Act and convince: Are my actions consistent with my judgments and can I convince others based on ethical reasoning?