



ETHICS IN TIMES OF COVID-19

NEWSLETTER
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Centre for Biomedical Ethics
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

trending covid topics



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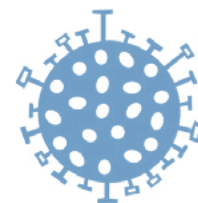
Public Health Surveillance

Dear colleagues,

The Covid-19 pandemic is forcing us to confront ethical issues in medical practice, research and policy: which patients should get access to life-saving medical equipment amid scarcity? Does the urgent need to find a treatment or vaccine mean that we can compromise on ethics in research? And what does it take for policymakers to remain trustworthy in managing this health emergency?

This Special Issue of the *Science, Health and Policy-Relevant Ethics in Singapore (SHAPES) Newsletter* gives you a digest of writings that address these and other ethical questions posed by the Covid-19 outbreak. Many of these issues have previously been addressed in the bioethics literature, but the Covid-19 outbreak has brought them to the forefront of public discussion and deliberation.

Triage and Resource Allocation



[Click on the links to see the full article]

The overwhelming of healthcare systems in many parts of the world has forced hospitals to triage which patients receive care. And if/when effective treatments or vaccines are identified and developed, there is likely to be a near-term shortage such that not all individuals in need of an intervention will be able to receive it. This has prompted consider-

able ethical deliberation over the basis on which to allocate scarce medical resources. Many suggest that saving the most lives should dictate who is given priority, but there are countervailing considerations – for example, providing resources to the worst off, or privileging healthcare workers or research participants in recognition of their service.

Framework for Rationing Ventilators and Critical Care Beds During the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Douglas B White and Bernard Lo,
Journal of the American Medical Association

Who Should Be Saved First? Experts Offer Ethical Guidance

by Austin Frank,
The New York Times

Coronavirus may force UK doctors to decide who they'll save

by Jonathan Ives,
The Guardian



Ethicists agree on who gets treated first when hospitals are overwhelmed by coronavirus

by Olivia Goodhill,
Quartz

Facing Covid-19 in Italy — Ethics, Logistics, and Therapeutics on the Epidemic's Front Line

by Lisa Rosenbaum,
New England Journal of Medicine

Should we give priority care to healthcare workers in the covid-19 pandemic?

by Daniel Sokol and Benjamin Gay,
BMJ Opinion

ICU triage: How many lives or whose lives?

By Angela Ballantyne,
Journal of Medical Ethics Blog

The Toughest Triage — Allocating Ventilators in a Pandemic

by Robert D. Truog, Christine Mitchell, and George Q. Daley,
New England Journal of Medicine

An Ethics Framework for Making Resource Allocation Decisions within Clinical Care: Responding to COVID-19

by Angus Dawson et al.,
Sydney Health Ethics





Research Ethics [Click on the links to see the full article]

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The growing global spread, rising death toll, and economic fallout from Covid-19 has many understandably desperate for effective treatments and/or preventative vaccines. Already, vaccines are being tested in phase I trials without full prior testing with animal models, and the US has been rushing approvals for promising but unproven therapies. This may be in tension with existing ethical protections and procedures in human subjects research. Questions are now arising about whether typical standards can be adjusted, and whether this is in tension with our responsibilities to protect study participants.

In the race for coronavirus vaccines, don't leave pregnant women behind

by Carleigh Krubiner, Ruth R Faden and Ruth A Karron,
STAT News

Researchers rush to test coronavirus vaccine in people without knowing how well it works in animals

by Eric Boodman,
STAT News

The race to develop coronavirus treatments pushes the ethics of clinical trials

by Olivia Goldhill,
Quartz

Coronavirus and the risks of 'speed science'

by Manas Sharma, Simon Scarr and Kate Kelland,
World Economic Forum
(Reuters)

Cancer Research Ethics and COVID-19

by Andrew Shuman and Rebecca D Pentz,
The Oncologist

Ethical standards for research during public health emergencies: Distilling existing guidance to support COVID-19 R&D

by the WHO Working Group on Ethics & COVID-19

Should scientists infect healthy people with the coronavirus to test vaccines?

by Ewen Callaway,
Nature



Public Health Surveillance

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Monitoring Covid-19 spread and tracing the contacts of individuals infected are essential components of containing the outbreak. Some surveillance mechanisms, such as tracking devices to monitor populations during times of peace may be alarming, as they substantially intrude into our privacy and personal freedoms. However, extreme danger to whole populations, such as with the current outbreak, arguably justifies constraints on privacy and personal freedoms. Simultaneously, people's tolerance of such intrusions may be higher than under normal circumstances, particularly if they trust their governments.

Guide to the ethics of surveillance and quarantine for novel coronavirus

by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics

Translating a Surveillance Tool into a Virus Tracker for Democracies

by Jennifer Valentino-DeVries,
The New York Times

[See also reporting on [TraceTogether](#), a similar app released in Singapore]

Evaluating COVID-19 contact tracing apps? Here are 8 privacy questions we think you should ask

by Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye et al.,
Computational Privacy Group

Other Resources

The effectiveness of moral messages on public health behavioural intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic

by Jim AC Everett et al., *PsyArXiv*

Towards an Ethical Response to COVID-19 in Malaysia

by 17 Malaysian bioethicists

Ethics Resources on the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

from The Hastings Centre

Statement on Covid-19: Ethical Considerations from a Global Perspective

by the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee (IBC) and the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST)