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Condition-of-Service Influenza Prevention in Health Care Settings

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Disclosure Statement



- I have no affiliation (financial or otherwise) with a pharmaceutical, medical device or communications organization.

Objectives



- As a result of their participation in this activity, individuals should be able to
 - Describe Kass' public health ethics framework
 - Justify who condition-of-service policies should apply to and what types of exemptions should be permitted
 - Analyze the balance of benefits and burdens of condition-of-service policies

Ethical Frameworks



- Professional
- Principlism
- Public Health

Professional



Justification

- Fiduciary Obligations
- Virtues

Criticism

- Many healthcare workers are not members of professions
 - Health Unit Coordinators
 - Housekeeping Staff
 - Food Service Employees
- Arguments based on professional duties do not apply to them

Principle Based Approach



Justification

- Principles
 - Respect for Autonomy
 - Nonmaleficence
 - Beneficence
 - Justice

Criticism

- Inadequate method to resolve conflicts between principles

Public Health



- What are the public health **goals** of the proposed program?
- How **effective** is the program in achieving its stated goals?
- What are the known or potential **burdens** of the program?
- Can burdens be **minimized**? Are there **alternative** approaches?
- Is the program implemented **fairly**?
- How can the benefits and burdens of a program be fairly **balanced**? What procedures will best allow for fair **consideration** of differing views?

What are the public health goals of the proposed program?

- Primary Goal: Preventing patients at higher risk of complications from becoming infected
- Secondary Goals: Maintaining a critical workforce
- Tertiary Goals: Building trust in health care

How effective is the program in achieving its stated goals?

- Efficacy of vaccine to prevent
 - Influenza
 - Nosocomial transmission of influenza in healthcare settings
 - Acute
 - Extended
- Efficacy of masks to prevent nosocomial transmission of influenza in healthcare settings

What are the known or potential burdens of the program?

- Side effects of vaccination
 - Injection-site pain
 - Allergic or immediate hypersensitivity reactions
- Restriction of individual liberty
 - Inconvenience
 - Distress
 - Violation of integrity and loss of self-respect

Can burdens be minimized? Are there alternative approaches?

- Improve patient vaccination rates
- Prevent transmission
- Improve worker vaccination rates
 - Voluntary
 - Mandatory

Is the program implemented fairly?



- Scope
 - Employees vs. Nonemployees
 - Direct vs. Indirect vs. No patient contact
- Exemptions
 - Medical
 - Nonmedical
 - Religious
 - Philosophical

How can the benefits and burdens of a program be fairly balanced?

- **100% of healthcare personnel**
 - with direct patient contact
 - **without medical contraindications**
 - or conscientious objections
- **vaccinated [or masked]**

What procedures will best allow for fair consideration of differing views?

- Union employees
- Nonunion employees
- Patients

Conclusions



- A public health ethics framework is the most appropriate ethical method for analyzing condition-of-service policies
- Condition-of-service policies should apply to all individuals with direct patient contact
- Permitting nonmedical exemptions for conscientious objectors helps to balance benefits and burdens