

Health Ethics Symposium | Involving Citizens in Pandemic Influenza Planning

Fact Sheet

Setting. Although meaningful citizen involvement is a core element of public health policy-making, achieving this involvement with respect to pandemic influenza policies has proved problematic. One complicating factor is that public health is one of two strands (the other strand involves clinical healthcare considerations) that must be braided into a coherent set of pandemic influenza policies. Since citizens are less central to the clinical-healthcare strand than the public health strand, care is required to ensure that bringing citizens into the public health mix doesn't intrude on the clinical healthcare domain.

In 2009 the Missouri Consortium of Health Ethics Organizations published a public health ethics guidance document: *Health Ethics Considerations: Planning for and Responding to Pandemic Influenza in Missouri*. Because this document does not address the clinical healthcare considerations referred to above, it can be the foundation for citizen engagement in the public health policy work relating to pandemic influenza.

Symposium.

On August 9, 2010, the MU Center for Health Ethics will host a one-day symposium for an invited group of Missouri health ethics leaders. The symposium will prepare these ethics leaders to invite the citizens of their communities to participate in the making of local public health policy regarding pandemic influenza preparedness and response. Specifically, the participants will learn how to use the ethical goals, processes and principles described in the guidance document as a framework for engaging citizens in the democratic policy-making process of "deliberative dialogue."

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