Ethical Dimensions of Advancing Exposure Methodology through Suspect Screening and Non-target Analysis

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Session: O03.03B
Aims of this discussion

• To facilitate dialogue about the ethical dimensions relevant to the presentations in this session with regard to, for instance, hypothesis formulation, methods, analysis, dissemination of results, data archival/sharing, and community engagement.

• To promote greater ethical transparency and accountability.

Before we move on, let’s quickly remind ourselves about Ethics Principles:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Bioethics</th>
<th>From Public Health &amp; Environmental Epidemiology</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Respect for autonomy:</strong> respecting the right of participants to self-determine the extent of their participation</td>
<td>• Protect the Most Vulnerable</td>
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<td><strong>Beneficence:</strong> doing good through our research</td>
<td>• The Precautionary Principle</td>
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<td><strong>Non-maleficence:</strong> doing no harm</td>
<td>• Environmental Justice</td>
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<td><strong>Social/Distributive Justice/ Fairness:</strong> who is deriving benefits and who is taking risks?</td>
<td>• Scientific Integrity</td>
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<td>• Protect the Public Interest Over Any Other Interests</td>
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<td>• Others …</td>
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DISCLOSURE: I have no conflicting interests in relation to the topic of this presentation
Background

• Biomarkers of exposure provide evidence of exposure and thus assist in targeting PRIMARY PREVENTION messaging in public health.

• SECONDARY PREVENTION involves screening to identify people who, given exposure, are experiencing patho-physiological changes that risk morbidity and premature mortality.
Questions

• Advances in technology make it possible for refined measurement tools for screening populations in ways unachievable in the past. What are the CONSEQUENCES of screening, both good and bad?

• Do we let technology drive our future, or can we shape it through ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS? Simply put: Do we do what we do because we can or because we should?

• Should we address exposure assessment without also considering health outcomes?
Questions (continued)

• Should ethical dimensions be considered *after-the-fact*, once the stable door has been opened, or *prior to* their introduction?

• Is it ethical not to translate results from health research into policy?

• Is the trajectory that humankind is on one driven by technological advance?

• **CAN BEING AWARE OF THESE ASPECTS ENHANCE OUR ROLE AS CITIZEN SCIENTISTS?**
About ISEE Ethics and Philosophy Committee

https://iseepi.org/Public/About_Us/Committees/Ethics_and_Philosophy/

• Established in 1991; we address ethical and philosophical underpinnings at the nexus of environment and health

• We sponsor symposia; maintain and develop ethics guidelines; offer recommendations and definitions; provide moral support to victimized colleagues

• Are you aware of the ISEE Ethics Guidelines for Environmental Epidemiologists - Revised April, 2012? Have you read them?
  (Kramer et al. 2012 Revised Ethics Guidelines for Environmental Epidemiologists. Environ Health Perspect 120(8)

• New members are welcome! Send enquiries to any one of:
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