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Indiana State
Department of Health
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Ethical Issues Associated with Pandemic Influenza:
Recommendations from the Indiana University Center for Bioethics

There is an iterative and reciprocal relationship between the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), local health departments (LHD), and local hospitals with respect to ethical issues associated with pandemic influenza preparedness and response.

For each recommendation proposed to the ISDH to address ethical issues with pandemic influenza, there is a commensurate recommendation being made to the LHD and hospitals. Described below is how the recommendations directed at ISDH can be read and interpreted for local use by LHD and hospital officials.

The overarching recommendation, however, is the following:

All local health departments and hospitals should fully familiarize themselves with and take seriously the ethical issues raised by pandemic influenza to ensure that these issues are considered as part of their overall planning considerations.

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Triage and Allocation of Scarce Resources	
Recommendation to ISDH	Relevance to LHD and Hospitals
1. The State should adopt the New York State Workgroup's framework for ventilator triage	LHDs and Hospitals should familiarize themselves with the New York framework and be prepared to engage in discussion about its implementation
2. The State should encourage all acute care facilities to adopt a common procedure for addressing how to allocate scarce resources	Acute care facilities should review procedures and policies to determine whether and to what extent this is possible and seeks ways of implementing such a procedure
3. The State should require all acute care facilities to adopt a common procedure to conduct a daily retrospective review of all triage decisions	Acute care facilities should review procedures and policies to determine whether and to what extent this is possible

Management of the Health Care Workforce	
Recommendation to ISDH	Relevance to LHD and Hospitals
1. The State must identify all healthcare workers who are deemed to be critically necessary during the pandemic	Health care institutions should assist the State in developing criteria
2. The State and healthcare organizations should adopt a "high expectations, no punishment" approach to absenteeism	Health care institutions should review their human resources policies
3. The State should set and communicate expectations that healthcare institutions have adequate medical supplies and that these institutions ensure these supplies be made available to all personnel expected to interact with patients	Healthcare institutions should review their policies and budgets for obtaining and maintaining adequate medical supplies
4. The State should encourage healthcare institutions to establish clear policies for determining sanctions for noncompliance with expected responsibilities that are both fair and responsive to exceptional circumstances	Healthcare institutions should review their human resources policies

Altered Standards of Care	
Recommendation to ISDH	Relevance to LHD and Hospitals
1. The State should develop a protocol which would take effect for all healthcare institutions upon the declaration of a statewide pandemic influenza emergency by the Governor	Healthcare institutions should ensure there is a protocol for implementation
2. The State should begin immediately to engage leadership of all healthcare facilities in discussions about the impact of a statewide protocol for altered standards of care, including the selection of alternate care sites	Healthcare leadership should participate in these discussions
3. The State should develop a database of healthcare workers and volunteers that can be accessed efficiently to provide surge capacity during the pandemic	Healthcare institutions should assist insofar as they are able in the design and implementation of such a database
4. The State should ensure that a comprehensive program is developed and implemented to provide all healthcare workers with adequate training and information regarding pandemic flu and their anticipated responsibilities	Healthcare institutions should ensure that opportunities for such training are made available to workers
5. The State should establish minimal standards for modified documentation procedures which can be implemented efficiently at the time of the pandemic for all healthcare institutions, mortuaries, and others	Healthcare institutions should provide input on these standards and review internal policies accordingly

Vaccine and Anti-Viral Medication	
Recommendation to ISDH	Relevance to LHD and Hospitals
1. The State should adopt a system similar to the California Department of Health Services' and construct a prioritization list based on its implementation	LHDs and Hospitals should familiarize themselves with the California DHS system for prioritization and be prepared to engage in discussion about its implementation
2. The State should develop an education module for county health departments regarding the criteria by which the prioritization plan is developed, and counties should be instructed as to how prioritization decisions will be made	The counties should work with the State to identify areas of need to ensure that education modules are responsive to local circumstances