

PAHO Ethics Review Committee

Ethical oversight of research
conducted with PAHO's
involvement

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PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



28th PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE

64th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 17-21 September 2012

Provisional Agenda Item 4.9

CSP28/14, Rev. 1 (Eng.)
20 September 2012
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

BIOETHICS: TOWARDS THE INTEGRATION OF ETHICS IN HEALTH

Concept paper



Pan American
Health
Organization



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Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas

PAHOERC: 2015 data

- 83% increase in number of submissions (vs 2014): 75 proposals from 23 countries
- Proposals from TDR, iPIER program and E. Granda Ugalde program: 50% of submissions
- Different levels of PAHO involvement
- Prominent topics: Infectious / neglected diseases and immunization
- At the intersection between public health research and practice: many exemptions
- PAHOERC: No registry of research

Zika Ethics Consultation: Ethics Guidance on Key Issues Raised by the Outbreak

**Pan American Health Organization
Washington, D.C., April 6-7, 2016**



**Pan American
Health
Organization**



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE **Americas**

Regional
Program on
Bioethics



**Pan American
Health
Organization**



**World Health
Organization**

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The right(s) approach to Zika

The Zika virus epidemic is spreading: 63 countries are now reporting transmission, over 1500 cases of related microcephaly or CNS malformations have been confirmed this year, and knowledge on the disease is advancing slowly. Adding to the tension around Zika, at the epicentre of the outbreak, Brazil is bracing for a large-scale mass gathering: the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. Conflicting opinions on the need to postpone or cancel the Games have been expressed, but during the 69th World Health Assembly last month, the WHO issued clear public health advice on the matter: the Games will not significantly change the international spread of the virus and travellers can reduce their risk of contracting

managing infection in pregnant women. Vector control is emphasised, as well as personal protection such as clothing, bednets, repellents, and safe sex. Again these are sound recommendations, duly relayed by health authorities, but they certainly don't resonate in the poorest neighbourhoods of Brazil and other affected countries, where the availability, practicality, and affordability of protective items are doubtful and where safe sex is not always negotiable. When prevention fails, women of reproductive age or who are pregnant are faced with terrifying uncertainties, for lack of information, lack of access to basic services and diagnostic tests, and most importantly a blatant lack of choice.

Zika virus: ethics preparedness for old and new challenges

In its July editorial, *The Lancet Global Health* drew attention to the ethical challenges posed by the Zika virus outbreak.¹ The Regional Program on Bioethics at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) arranged an ethics consultation, funded by the Wellcome Trust, to provide ethically sound guidance for the outbreak. Ethicists—mostly from the Americas—and other professionals involved in the response analysed the ethical issues that affected countries had identified as most challenging and developed

are still posing challenges, and how to ensure that the same situation does not occur in a future outbreak.

Progress has certainly been made, encouraged by the Region of the America's 2012 commitment to integrate ethics in health care.⁵ The Zika virus outbreak has led to further progress. PAHO's Zika ethics consultation has strengthened our capacity to do ethics analysis collectively and provide guidance for specific problems. Moreover, ethics is being embedded in other areas—eg, in the support of PAHO's Latin American Center for Perinatology, Women and Reproductive Health to Ministries of Health to respond to the outbreak.⁶

- 5 Pan American Health Organization Directing Council. Bioethics: towards the integration of ethics in health. Concept paper. 28th Pan American Sanitary Conference, 64th Session of the Regional Committee; Washington, DC, USA; Sept 17–21, 2012 (CSP28/14, Rev.1). http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=18416&Itemid=&lang=en (accessed July 28, 2016).
- 6 Pan American Health Organization. The region makes a commitment on access to modern contraceptives in the context of the Zika virus alert. http://www.paho.org/clap/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=389:the-region-makes-a-commitment-on-access-to-modern-contraceptives-in-the-context-of-the-zika-virus-alert&catid=387&Itemid=354&lang=en (accessed July 28, 2016).



Thanks

www.paho.org/bioethics

See right tab for publications, resources, and mailing lists: *Investigación ÉTICA* and *Public Health Ethics*

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