

# Ethics In Research

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# Ethics



# What is Ethics?

- Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conduct of an activity.
- In Research Ethics the guiding principal is whether you are doing the right thing!
- The field of ethics concerns matters of value, is the research which is being done morally right?

# Major Ethical Issues in Research

- The major **ethical issues** in conducting **research** are:
  - a) Informed consent,
  - b) Beneficence- Do not harm
  - c) Respect for anonymity and confidentiality
  - d) Respect for privacy.

# Principles In Research Ethics

- Beneficence
- Autonomy
- Justice
- Consent
- Confidentiality and Privacy

# 1. Beneficence

- ❖ The fundamental ethical principle in research is that of Beneficence which is the guiding principle to do no harm and do what is good.
- ❖ In **research** ethics **researchers** should have the **welfare** of the **research** participant as a goal of any clinical trial or other **research** study.
- ❖ We do not want maleficence, this is a practice which opposes the welfare of any **research** participant

# Freedom from harm

- Only qualified people should conduct research
- Researchers be more careful especially dealing with harmful instruments in research
- Researcher must be prepared to stop research any time if any possible injury to subjects is eminent
- Close attention should be paid for possible psychological harm

## 2. Respect for Autonomy

- People should be allowed to make independent decisions, decisions that apply to their lives.
  - This means people are independent enough to make a choice of being in the research or NOT!
- Do not force or coerce people to participate in the research.
- Each man deserves respect because only he has had those exact life experiences and understands his emotions, motivations and body in such an intimate manner.

# Informed Consent

- With autonomy consent is informed
- Give participant enough time to think about need to participate
- Make sure they have understood what the research is about

# 3. Justice

- Fairness is expected to all Research participants.
- The right to fair treatment
- Fair and non discriminatory selection of participants
- Non pre-judicial(non damaging) treatment of those participants who decline
- Honoring of agreements made between researcher and participant

- Participants access to research personnel
- Participant's access to appropriate professional personnel
- Debriefing of participants to share results with others
- Respectful & courteous treatment at all times

# Respect for People

- The right to self determination – ability to control one's own activities

## **Self determination**

- Participants have the right to decide voluntarily to participate or not, or to stop before the research is completed

## **The right to full disclosure**

- The researcher has to fully describe the nature of the study to participants

# Issues Relating to Principle of Respect

- A difficult principle to adhere to at times
- Problems with ability of an individual to make informed judgment about the costs and benefits of participating
- E.G. Vulnerable groups such as children, convicts may be unable to true informed consent

# How should Ethics be applied

- Ethics should be applied on all stages of research which include;
  - During planning,
  - Conducting research
  - Evaluating a research project

- The first thing to do before designing a study is to consider the potential cost and benefits of the research.
- Avoid any risk of considerably harming people, the environment, or property unnecessarily.
- Tuskegee syphilis study is an example of a study which seriously violated these standards.

- Do not use deception on people participating, as was the case with the Tuskegee syphilis study
- Always obtain informed consent from all involved in the study.

## **Informed Consent** -*Written, Oral, and Waiver*

- Health policy and services researchers may seek written, oral, or waiver of informed consent and informed consent documentation.
- The propriety of written versus oral consent often depends on the type of research

# Confidentiality

- ◎ Separate individual identifiers from data in paper and electronic files
- ◎ Withhold identifying details of individuals and study sites in public reports and documents
- ◎ Destroy documents with individually-identified information as soon as possible