

Ethical Considerations in Community Health

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1. Introduction

- Ethics in community health concerns the moral principles guiding work with populations rather than only individuals.
- It balances the good of the community with the rights of its members.

2. Core Principles

- **Autonomy:** respecting people's right to make informed choices about their health.
- **Beneficence:** acting to promote the wellbeing of the community.
- **Non-maleficence:** avoiding harm through interventions or research.
- **Justice:** distributing benefits, risks, and resources fairly.

3. Community-Level Issues

- Balancing individual freedom against measures that protect public health, such as quarantine.
- Ensuring equitable access for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

4. Consent and Confidentiality

- Obtaining informed consent for screening, treatment, and data collection.
- Protecting the privacy of personal and community health information.

5. Practical Challenges

- Limited resources force difficult priority-setting decisions.
- Cultural differences may conflict with standard health recommendations.

6. Summary

- Ethical community health practice protects rights while promoting collective wellbeing.
- The four principles provide a framework for resolving difficult decisions.