

A grand experiment: ethical responsibilities in the global rollout of COVID-19 vaccines

The unprecedented speed and scale of global rollouts of COVID-19 vaccines is playing a critical role in effectively responding to the pandemic. Decisions about global vaccine rollout have been made rapidly, informed by best available clinical research findings. What ethical responsibilities arise to monitor the safety and effectiveness of pandemic vaccines which are rolled out while still being evaluated in clinical trials? Globally, as over eight million doses of COVID-19 vaccines are received per day, what mechanisms should exist to ensure the sustained capacity to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of vaccination?

Time: 29 March 2021 1pm-2pm GMT

To register: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IlvQA_WMQI-MmeKNglGwRA

Chair: Professor Gagandeep Kang, Wellcome Trust Research Laboratory, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India

Panel: Professor Marc Lipsitch, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, MA
Professor Dirceu Greco, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
Dr Pearson Nkhoma, Malawi-Liverpool-Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Unit,
Blantyre, Malawi

The following questions will form the basis of the seminar's panel discussion. Seminar attendees are invited to submit questions in advance of the seminar when they [register](#) or during the live discussion.

- 1) What kinds of responsibilities arise, and for whom, to evaluate vaccine safety and effectiveness during the exceptionally early public health rollout of various COVID-19 vaccines?
- 2) How should pandemic-burdened health systems globally prioritise vaccine rollout and monitoring? Is the existing evidence of safety and efficacy sufficient to justify rollout rates which outstrip local capacities to monitor/evaluate outcomes?

Background reading

Dagan N, Barda N, Kepten E, Miron O, Perchik S, Katz MA, Hernán MA, Lipsitch M, Reis B, Balicer RD. BNT162b2 mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine in a Nationwide Mass Vaccination Setting. *N Engl J Med*. 2021 Feb 24;NEJMoa2101765. doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2101765.

Vasileiou, Eleftheria et al., ***Effectiveness of First Dose of COVID-19 Vaccines Against Hospital Admissions in Scotland: National Prospective Cohort Study of 5.4 Million People***. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3789264>
or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3789264>

Expert reaction to preprint from Scotland looking at hospitalisations in Scotland and vaccinations: <https://www.sciencemediacentre.org/expert-reaction-to-preprint-from-scotland-looking-at-hospitalisations-in-scotland-and-vaccinations/>