

**Re-visiting mandatory vaccination for COVID-19: Evidence and ethics
14th February 2022, 1.00-2.00PM (London time)**

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools for protecting people against COVID-19. Consequently, some governments and institutions have made COVID-19 vaccination 'mandatory' to increase vaccination rates and achieve public health goals, and others may be considering doing the same. Yet, given the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and evolving evidence regarding the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines against novel variants of concern (e.g., Omicron), the number of doses necessary to achieve public health objectives, and durability of protection, the scientific and ethical justification for mandatory vaccination for COVID-19 is similarly shifting and may be waning. This seminar will take stock of where countries find themselves with respect to the pandemic and explore this present context for evaluating the ethics of mandatory vaccination for COVID-19.

Chair:

- [Prof Effy Vayena](#), Health Ethics and Policy Lab, Department of Health Sciences and Technology, ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland.

Panel:

- [Ezekiel J. Emanuel, M.D., Ph.D.](#), Vice Provost for Global Initiatives, Co-Director, Healthcare Transformation Institute, Levy University Professor, Perelman School of Medicine and The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA
- [Dr Christiane Druml](#), UNESCO Chair on Bioethics at the Medical University of Vienna, Ethics, Collections and History of Medicine, Medical University of Vienna, 1090, Vienna, Austria
- [Mr Allan Achesa Maleche](#), Executive Director, KELIN, Kenya

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 level of reduction in risk for infection or transmission associated with vaccination is necessary to justify mandatory vaccination? Can mandatory vaccination be ethically justified if COVID-19 vaccines are only marginally effective or ineffective at preventing transmission but very effective at reducing risk for severe disease, hospitalization, and death?
2. How should potential unintended harms associated with mandatory vaccination (e.g., erosion of public trust) be weighed against their potential benefits (e.g., preventing outcomes like hospitalizations and deaths)?
3. What are the potential risks associated with *not* using vaccination mandates in pandemic response, including the implications for health and social care sectors, air travel, border management, schools, etc.
4. If vaccination mandates are used in pandemic response, what metrics or indicators should be used to inform when they should be ended?