



Principal Investigator: Prof. Ilina Singh, University of Oxford

The Ethics Accelerator receives core funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of UKRI's covid-19 funding. Grant number AH/V013947/1.

www.ukpandemicethics.org

UK Pandemic Ethics Accelerator

Seeking Expressions of Interest:

Need beyond COVID: Addressing the backlog for medical care in the NHS

Please use the following reference for all correspondence and submissions relating to this call: AH/V013947/1/PA1/001

The UK Pandemic Ethics Accelerator Priority Area intends to commission a research review from an external academic to support its current inquiry. This document sets out the broad aims and scope of the research envisaged.

Background

The management of the coronavirus pandemic has required wide-ranging changes to the provision of healthcare, including significant delays to non-urgent treatment. Indeed, modelling suggests that from March 2020- February 2021, the UK saw 46'000 excess deaths as a result of changes made to emergency care and adult social care in response to the pandemic. As mass vaccination enables us to progress from the emergency stage of the pandemic and to consider the long-term management of COVID-19, The UK Pandemic Ethics Accelerator is proposing to commission research concerning the ethics of addressing the backlog of unmet care needs in the NHS in the wake of the pandemic. Such research may include an assessment of likely unmet care needs (in both physical and mental health), and whether existing ethical frameworks are well suited to prioritisation in the post-pandemic context. Looking further ahead, such research might also address ethical issues in securing a healthcare workforce that will be sufficient to meet demand in the UK after the pandemic.

Purpose

To assist the Priority Area to develop a broad and comprehensive understanding of what the unmet care needs are, and an analysis of the relevant ethical issues

pertinent to ensuring that these needs can be met in an optimally just way as the pandemic recedes and once the maximum available benefit from vaccination has been achieved. The Priority Area would like to understand not only physical and mental health needs but also where these interact to create needs that are complex and will require coordinated care across medical and healthcare specialisms. The research should also elucidate how socio-economic and cultural factors influence and determine the particular unmet needs that will require treatment in the wake of covid-19 pandemic.

Approach

The review should be based on an analysis of the existing literature and other publicly available resources. Much of the information required should be reported descriptively, and analysis of the ethical issues should be presented in a neutral and even-handed way. However, the Priority Area would welcome recommendations about how unmet health needs might be met, and inferences or informed judgements about the effectiveness of existing delivery systems and direction of travel for governance where appropriate.

The review would be expected to cover:

- (a) The scope and content of the core measures and standards including:
 - (i) legal standards and mandatory requirements for care;
 - (ii) non-legal guidance, such as clinical guidance, administrative rulings, research ethics guidelines, industry guidelines and any other forms of relevant ethical guidance;
 - (iii) key concepts, definitions and distinctions (e.g. 'unmet'; urgent vs non-urgent; physical v. mental health; diagnosis v. treatment v. prevention).
- (b) Procedures for implementation and governance of those standards, including their legal status, institutional mechanisms for standard-setting, monitoring compliance, taking enforcement action and imposing sanctions in cases of non-compliance;
- (c) Level and pattern of compliance in practice (and any areas that are currently contested);
- (d) Any identified gaps or ambiguities, especially in the light of non-covid related healthcare needs nevertheless caused by the pandemic, that may not have been in view when measures were developed, and any current or anticipated initiatives to address these;

- (e) Any concerns that may have been raised about disproportionate effects of relevant technologies on gender, cultural, social or religious groups, or minorities.

Scope

The review should cover the following levels and jurisdictions:

- UK
- National levels: England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales

Information for researchers

We welcome proposals from researchers with complementary expertise working together.

Interested researchers are invited to submit a brief proposal (no more than 1000 words, excl. CVs) setting out how they would meet the objectives outlined in the brief. This should include:

- a brief summary of expertise and 1-page CV of those who will be involved
- up to 5 headline points that the review would be expected to make
- an outline of the proposed approach to fulfilling the brief (research methodology)
- an indicative outline of the final review (expected to be between 1500-3000 words in length)

The proposal should be submitted to the Ethics Accelerator Secretariat by 5pm BST on **June 11, 2021**. The expected date for submission of the final report is 5pm BST on **July 2, 2021**. An honorarium of £750 is offered for this work.

To discuss further, please contact Dr Jonathan Pugh:

jonathan.pugh@philosophy.ox.ac.uk

Please submit proposals and submissions to the Secretariat:

ukpandemicethics@psych.ox.ac.uk

<p>Please use the following reference in the email subject title for all correspondence relating to this call: AH/V013947/1/PA1/001</p>
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Peer Review

All proposals are subject to internal and external peer review.

All final products for the Pandemic Ethics Accelerator are peer reviewed.

What Will We Do with the Final Review?

We will publish the review, with the researcher(s) identified as authors, on the Pandemic Ethics Accelerator website. We may also write a Policy Brief based on the review; and we may offer researchers an opportunity to write a blog based on the review. In all outputs, the researcher(s) are clearly identified as authors, and the Accelerator is identified as the funder. If there is press interest or interest from policy-makers as a result of the review, we will direct that interest to the author(s).

We ask that the author(s) do not publish the review elsewhere without express permission from the Pandemic Ethics Accelerator.

If authors go on to develop the review for academic publication, the Pandemic Ethics Accelerator would expect to be acknowledged as (one of the) funders of the work.

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About the UK Pandemic Ethics Accelerator

The UK Ethics Accelerator is a UKRI/AHRC-funded initiative that aims to bring UK ethics research expertise to bear on the multiple, ongoing ethical challenges arising during a pandemic emergency. We provide rapid evidence, guidance, and critical analysis to decision-makers across science, medicine, government, and public health. We also facilitate public stakeholder deliberation around key ethical challenges.