

# Public Health Ethics for MC

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# Public Health Ethics

*People are responsible to act on the basis of what they know. Knowledge is not morally neutral and often demands action.*

- Moreover, information is not to be gathered for idle interest
- Public health should seek to translate available information into timely action

# Perennial Tension in Public Health

- The common need in Public Health is to weigh the concerns of both the individual and the community
- These may often be in conflict

# Scenario 1

**In your country, you have decided to add infant MC to the MC rollout program. A considerable amount of resources has gone into developing this aspect of the program. The program is voluntary. In the first year, less than 5% of infants receive MC. The MOH wants to see higher uptake (>90%) in this component of your program, to justify continuing infant MC.**

- What changes would you make, if any?
- What do think about mandatory infant MC?
- What are the benefits of an 'opt-out' approach?

# Scenario 2

**Your health economic advisor has done the calculations – you can't afford to start both a national MC program AND offer HPV vaccination to adolescent girls. You have to choose one.**

- Which would you choose, and how do you justify choosing MC, if that was your choice?
- How would you manage this in the media?

# Scenario 3

**In a large health district, 50 clinics have the necessary infrastructure and staffing to roll out MC, but the program can only afford to fund activity in 25 clinics. A decision is made to randomly assign clinics to participating in the program.**

- In the clinics where MC is not being offered, will you adjust your VCT risk reduction counseling messages to include/exclude information about MC?
- What will you do about men requesting MC at non-assigned clinics?

# Scenario 4

**You oversee a district where the prevalence of HIV among men is 40%. You have limited resources and staff to implement MC.**

- Will you adjust your eligibility criteria for MC excluding men with HIV, given this high prevalence?
- If so, how will you deal with possible community responses and mitigate the stigmatization your decision may cause?
- If you decide not to exclude men with HIV, how will you deal with the potential for diminished programmatic effects?