Ethical principles for infectious disease eradication

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Eradication of infectious diseases is the great example multi-disciplinarian activity in global level, where the complex of epidemiology, virology, sociology and ethics plays the principal role for achievement the expected result. The formation of an algorithm of ethical principles necessary to ensure the success in the global policy of infectious diseases eradication has been the main reason of analysis the specific role of ethics in the process of elimination of infections by vaccination in the various stages of the global process: planning, organizing, conducting, monitoring and tracking the process of eradication. In the first stage connected with choosing the infection to be eliminated, the priority tasks include: the availability of objective knowledge about the anthropoid nature of the disease and the guarantee of the absence of mutation of the virus, the availability of an effective and safe vaccine, and an adequate surveillance system for the infection. Socio-political prerequisites for the elimination of infection should be the opportunity and readiness of the international community for concerted efforts on a global scale. Understanding these goals allows for establishing significant ethical characteristics of this stage, which primarily relate to reliability, honesty and non-engagement in scientific approaches. Among the ethical components that play an important role at the level of individual responsibility, it is necessary to note the personal decency, conscientiousness, caution and exactingness of the persons responsible for the assessment and interpretation of scientific information. To ensure comprehensive consideration of existing hypotheses, their critical evaluation and the argumentation of the forecast, it is necessary to follow ethical principles of openness, pluralism and independence of ethical valuation. The choice of the optimal vaccine preparation and the possibility of its universal use should be based on ethical principles of overcoming conflict of interests, altruism, equitable distribution of the burden and benefits. The ethical format of the socio-political and economic aspects of the eradication program consists of following the principles of international solidarity, social responsibility, and respect for cultural, historical and socio-religious diversity. The important role of all of universal ethical principles has been indicated and confirmed during the regional/national activity in the frame of WHO program for eradication of poliomyelitis, measles, and rubella.

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