

Principles of Bioethics

Respect for Persons emphasizes the inherent worth and dignity of each individual, and acknowledges a person's right to make his or her own choices. It means not treating people as a means to an end.

Maximizing Benefits and Minimizing Harms asks how we can do the most good and the least amount of harm. It considers how one would directly help others and act in their best interests, while "doing no harm."

Justice considers how we can treat people fairly and equitably. It involves the sharing of resources, risks, and costs according to what is "due" to each person.

Apply the Principles of Bioethics to the Pandemic Flu! activity from yesterday.

Respect for Persons: By respecting the mother's choice to forgo medication, we are respecting her autonomy and right to self-determination.

Maximizing Benefits and Minimizing Harms: If we want the highest number of people to benefit, we might choose to save the doctor in hopes that she could, in turn, help to save more lives.

Justice: Drawing straws (distributing the vaccine without regard to social status, age, or profession) would be a "fair" way to make the decision.