

Values and Benefits

Calvin WL Ho

Centre for Biomedical Ethics, National University of Singapore

International Expert Consultation: Medicines as a Key Component of Universal Health Coverage

2-4 October 2013



Centre for Biomedical Ethics
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine



Overview

- Why values matter?
- A process framework for decision-making:
accountability for reasonableness
- Going beyond process
(Substantive Value)
- Process and Substantive Value:
Ethical deliberation for evidence-based
policy-making and implementation



Cost-Effectiveness is just one goal

- Efficiency:
 - Cost-effectiveness analysis
(for prioritizing new drug or technology)
 - programme budgeting
 - marginal analysis when deciding among programmes
- Narrow range of values
- How to identify full range of relevant values?



Process to Consider:

Accountability for reasonableness (A4R)

- Proposed by Norman Daniels and Jim Sabin
- Ethical framework to guide decision-makers in implementing fair priority setting
- Emphasizes democratic deliberation and is a priority-setting process
- Four basic conditions encompassed



First Two Conditions

■ Relevance

- Priority setting decisions must be based on reasons that “fair-minded” people can agree are relevant in the context
- People are “fair-minded” when they seek to cooperate according to terms they can justify to each other

■ Publicity

- Rationales for priority setting must be publicly accessible



Another Two Conditions

■ Revision and Appeal

- Should be a mechanism for challenge, review and change
- This includes an opportunity to revise decisions after considering feedback from stakeholders

■ Enforcement

- Leaders within the organisation should ensure that above conditions are met



Efforts to Implement A4R

- UK National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence: Citizen's council to provide input on relevant social values (e.g. age) for use as a criterion in setting limits
- Mexico's *Seguro Popular*: Process developed to consider inputs from clinical, economic, ethical and social working groups, with disclosure of full rationale behind decisions
- Tanzania's Response to Accountable Priority-Setting for Trust in Health Systems



Justice as a Substantive Value

- Justice – Like cases should be treated alike
- Distribution of benefits and burdens of health services should be allocated based on a set of criteria that is fair
- Reasonable disagree over how criteria should be applied and which values to emphasize
 - Risk Classification vs. Need
- Complicated by factors including:
 - Clinical uncertainty
 - Competing goals of patients, programs and systems
 - Multiple stakeholder interests



...and an end in itself

- Not always possible to resolve differences between conflicting values
 - Consider very costly (but effective) drug benefitting a few patients vs. Less costly drug (but less effective) drug benefitting many patients
- There should at least be an environment where conflicting values can be identified and considered in morally acceptable manner
- BUT should Justice be an end in itself?
 - Fairness vs. Empowerment



Values-based Approach

- Aspirational in part
- Invitation to critical reflection on the values-implication of health coverage and financial protection
- Health policy may be based on fundamentally sound reasons, but may have unethical consequences that require it to be changed
- Open and transparent discussions can help to uncover conflicts, set goals and guide action

*Thank you for your
attention!*

UNIQUELY
Singapore
visitsingapore.com

