

Ethics and Pandemic Flu: a Perspective from the UK

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Presentation Plan

- UK's ethical framework
 - Origins
 - Purpose
 - Summary
- During the A H1N1 (2009) Pandemic, examples:
 - Post mortems
 - Antiviral policy
 - Vaccination programme
- What next?



UK's Pandemic Flu Ethical Framework: Origins



- 2006 – international literature review including:
 - “Stand on Guard for Thee” (Canada)
 - National Ethics Advisory Committee (New Zealand)
 - WHO working papers (prior to their 2007 report)
- Advisory body: CEAPI (Committee on Ethical Aspects of Pandemic Influenza)
 - Multi-disciplinary
 - 2 lay people, including specialist advisor on minority ethnic issues
 - England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

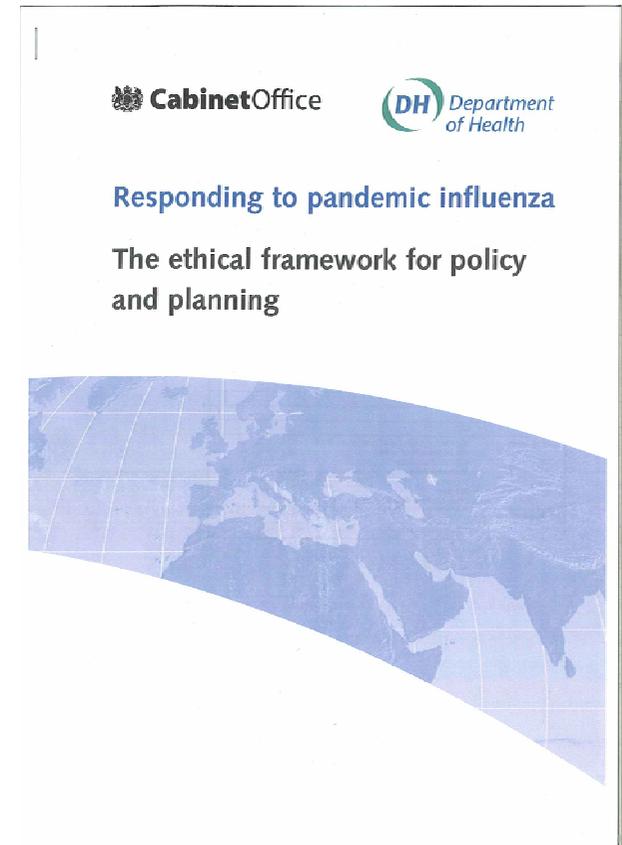
UK's Pandemic Flu Ethical Framework: Pre-2009 Pandemic

- **Short, user-friendly expression of principles (underpinned by broad spectrum of ethical thought)**
- **For policy makers and planners (respecting ethical frameworks of professional groups)**
- **Checklist: aiming to rule out the ethically unacceptable**
- **With framework developed detailed considerations of all key pandemic flu preparedness national guidance eg**
 - **Vaccine prioritisation**
 - **Managing deaths**
 - **Mental health guidance**

Responding to pandemic influenza: the ethical framework for policy and planning

- Fundamental underpinning principle - equal concern & respect

- Ethical principles:
 - Respect
 - Minimising harm
 - Fairness
 - Working Together
 - Reciprocity
 - Keeping things in proportion
 - Flexibility
 - Good decision-making
 - Openness & transparency
 - Inclusiveness
 - Accountability
 - Reasonableness



Uses in the Influenza A H1N1 (2009) Pandemic (1)

- CEAPI
 - Considered decision and guidance documents in committee & in writing
 - Direct discussions with Chair
 - Considerable reliance on key DH expert (Dr Elaine Gadd)

- Eg 1: Should post mortems be compulsory?
 - Respect?
 - Minimise harm?
 - In proportion?



Uses in the Influenza A H1N1 (2009) Pandemic (2)

- Eg 2: antiviral policy: treat all or targeted approach?
 - Different countries, different views
 - Science not conclusive
 - Ethics important
 - Paper considered by cross-Government and 4 nations Ministers
 - neither unethical, both reasonable

- Eg 3: Phase 2 of vaccination programme - children
 - Ethical issues – a factor in guiding the decisions



Lessons Learned



- Few new ethical issues raised in pandemic
- Importance of thinking through key issues in advance
- Ethical framework can assist in assessing new issues as they develop
- CEAPI an asset: can be consulted at any time

What next?

- Examples in local planning
- Review use of ethical framework in swine flu pandemic
- Consider revising approach – review of Pandemic Flu National Framework
- Embedding the wider use of ethical frameworks?
- Professional training
- What else?

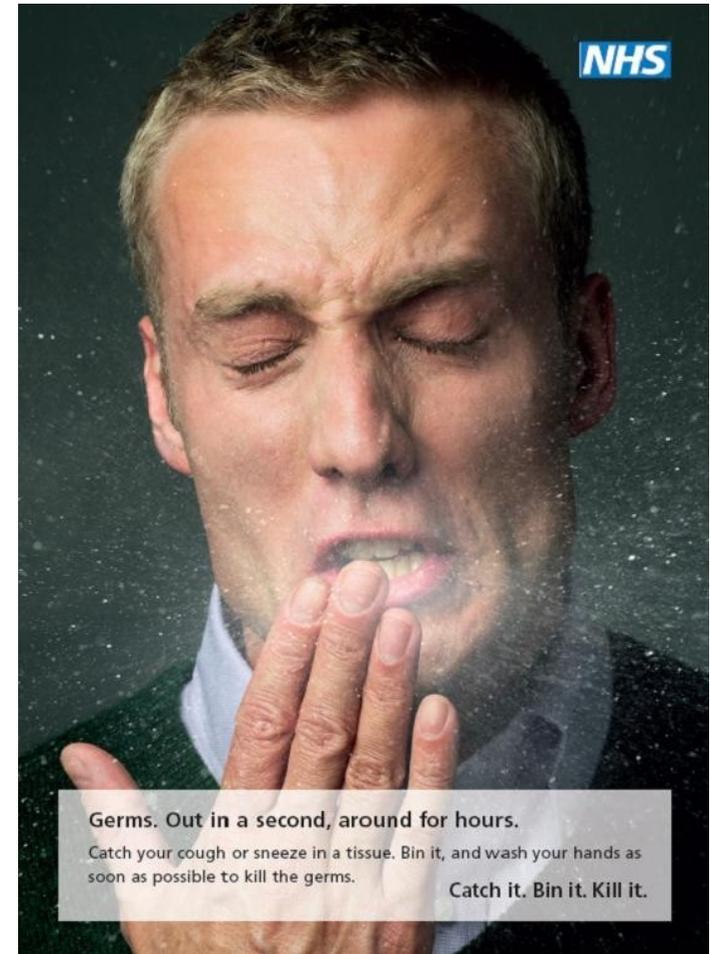
Links

www.dh.gov.uk

- Search 'CEAPI'
 - Ethical framework
 - CEAPI minutes
 - CEAPI's approach to ethical issues
 - Membership
- Search 'pandemic flu'
 - Pandemic Flu National Framework (to be updated)
 - Large amount of other guidance

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Thank goodness the hole's
at their end!

