

Ethics in the Worst of Times: Rationing to Protect the Public's Health During a Severe Influenza Pandemic

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Goals for Today

- Inform you about the MN Pandemic Ethics Project
 - A collaboration between the University of Minnesota Center for Bioethics and the Minnesota Center for Health Care Ethics
 - Funded by MDH
- Hear your perspectives and values

Team Members

■ MCHCE

- Ellie Garrett
- Karen G. Gervais
- Ruth Mickelsen
- Angela Witt Prehn
- Dorothy E. Vawter

■ U of M Center for Bioethics

- Debra A. DeBruin
- Jeffrey Kahn
- JP Leider
- Joan Liaschenko
- Mary Faith Marshall
- Steven Miles
- Elizabeth Parilla
- Carol Tauer
- Susan Wolf

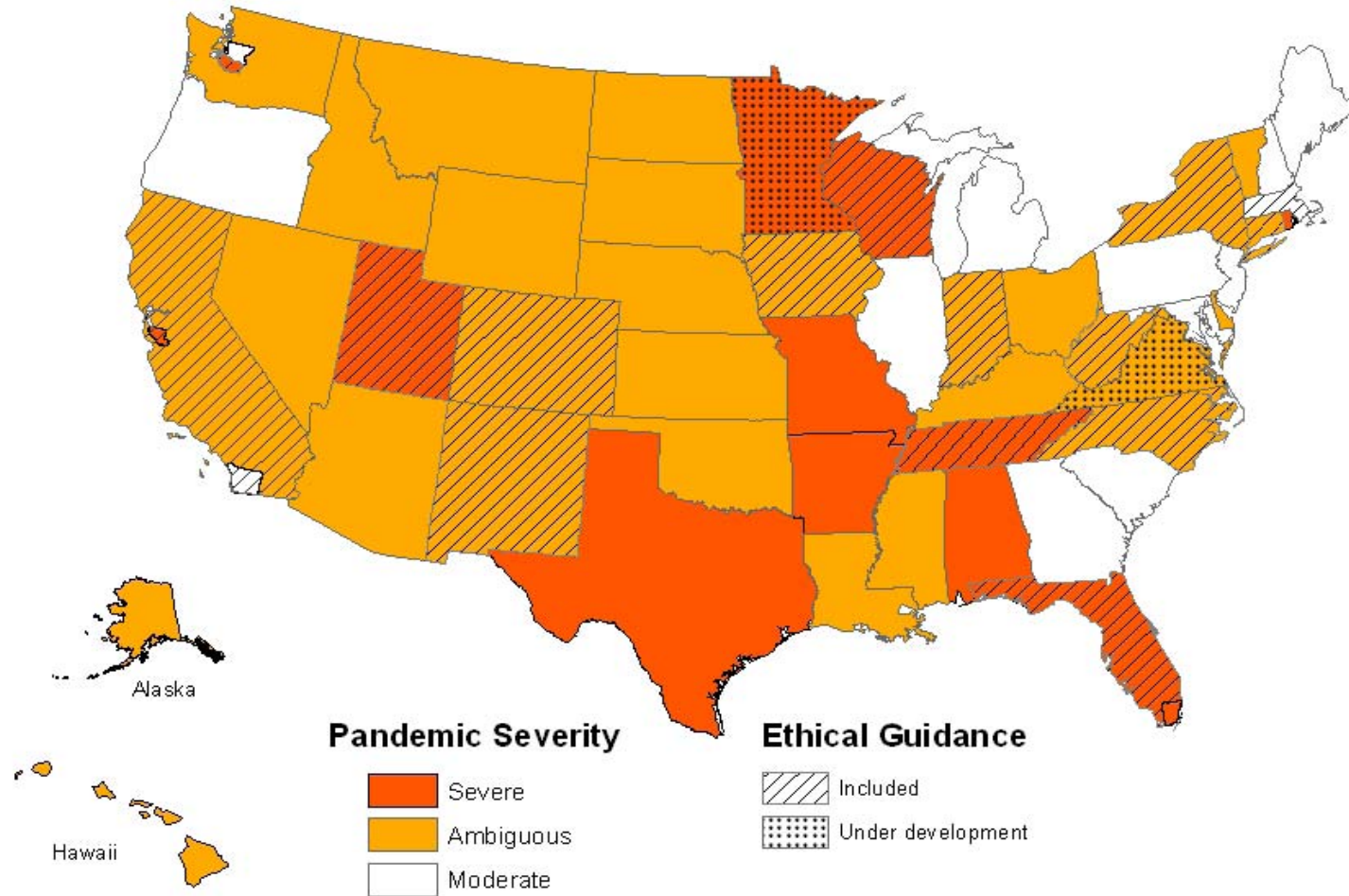
Scope of Project

- Many ethical issues in severe pandemic
 - Rationing
 - Health care and public health resources
 - Other resources (e.g., food, water, gas)
 - Stockpiling
 - Limits on liberty, privacy
- **Our focus: rationing of health care and public health resources**

Scope of Project (*cont.*)

- Case studies:
 - Antivirals (prevention/treatment)
 - N95s (PPE)
 - Masks (PPE)
 - Vaccines (prevention)
 - Ventilators (treatment)
- Status of recommendations:
advisory, not mandates

State and County Pandemic Plans and Ethical Guidance*



*Current as of September 2007; Colorado, Iowa and Wisconsin current as of March 2008

Resource Allocation Panel

- Public-private group of ~50 Minnesotans
 - Ethics
 - Faith communities
 - Health systems
 - Clinicians
 - Public health
 - Special needs populations
 - Community advocates
 - Communication and public engagement
 - Public safety
 - Law
 - Business
- Started meeting in May 2007

State Advisors

- Over two dozen non-voting advisors from state government agencies
 - Health
 - Administration
 - Employee Relations
 - Human Services
 - Labor and Industry
 - Public Safety

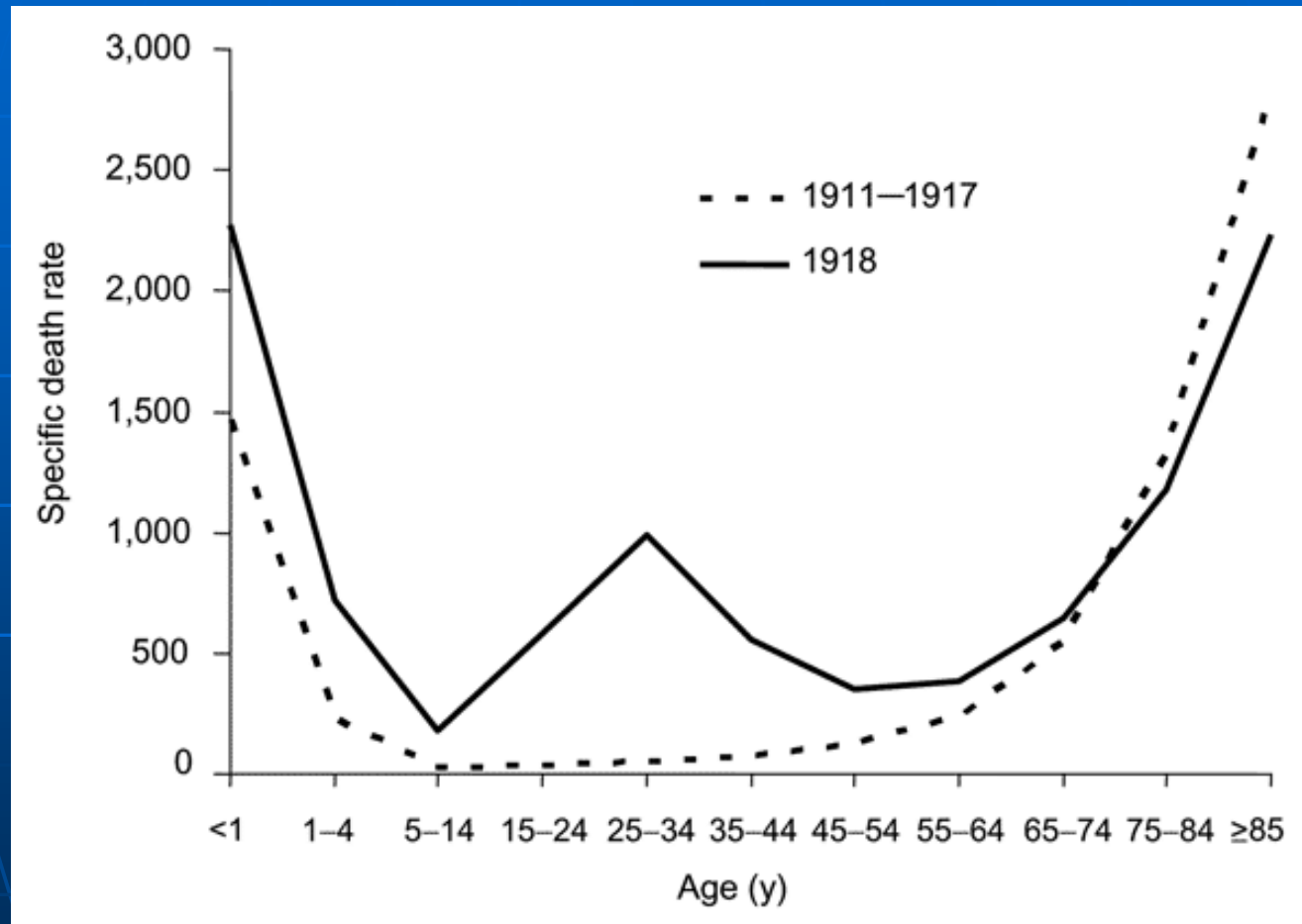
Expert Work Groups

- 4 resource-specific
- Ethics
- Protocol Committee
- Started meeting in June 2007

Assumptions: Pandemic

- 1918-type pandemic
 - 2 years, 3 waves
- How many could die?
 - 100 million globally
 - Case fatality rate
 - 10 – 25 x moderate flu pandemic
 - 25 – 31 x seasonal flu
- Large-scale infrastructure disruption

"U-" and "W-" Shaped Combined Influenza and Pneumonia Mortality 1911–1918



Taubenberger JK, Morens DM. *Emerg Infect Dis* [serial online]. 2006;12(1):19

Themes

- Be informed by federal guidance, but not limited;
- The importance of equity and fairness;
- The evolving nature of the pandemic;
- Building on existing strengths