

Ethics and Disaster Preparation

IOM Workshop: Altered Standards of Care

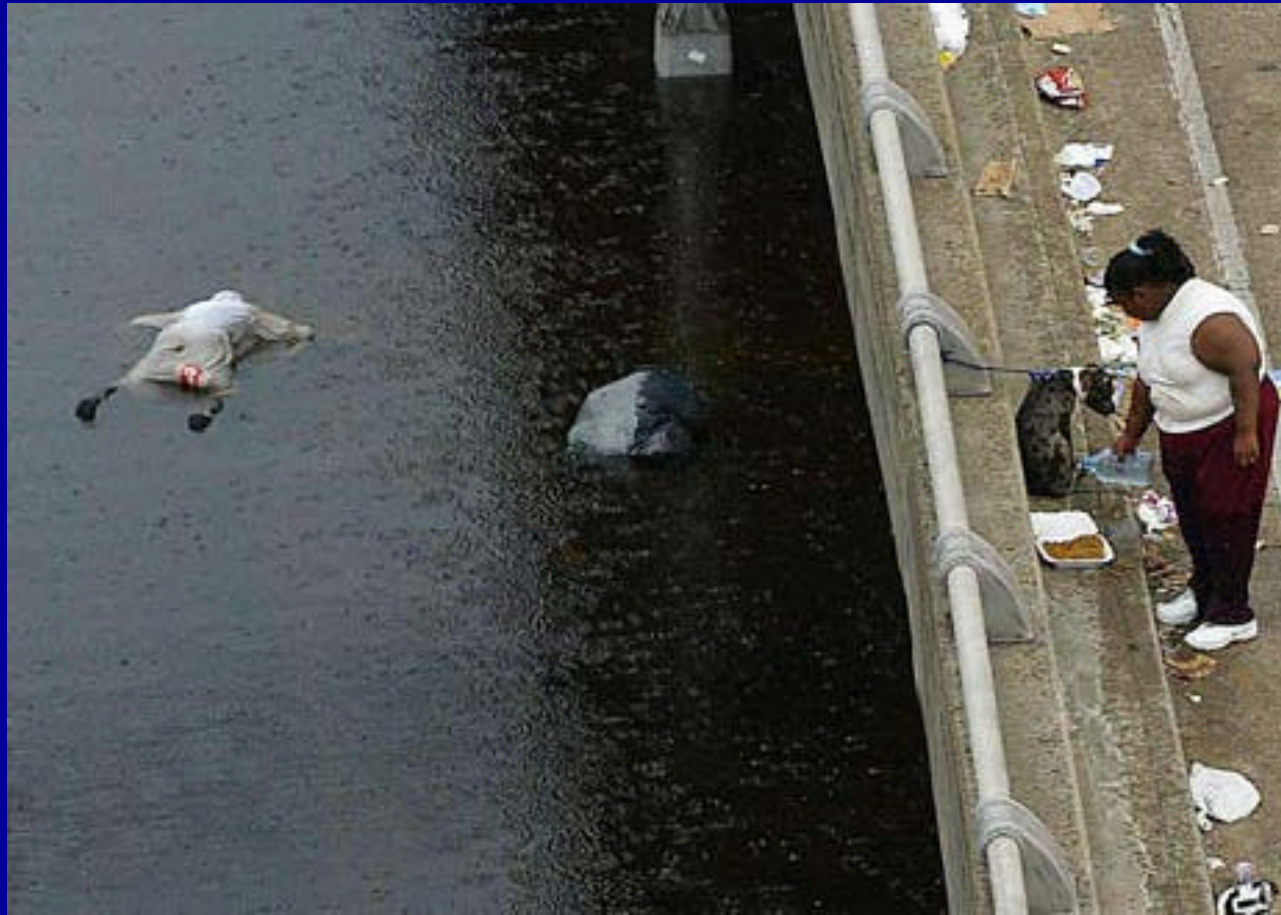
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Can we afford ethics in emergencies?

- Duty to Plan
- Planning includes ethical implications



Drowning Victim,
Hurricane Katrina

Elements of Ethical Public Policy

- Transparency
- Fairness
- Consistency

Transparency

- Expert research and opinion
- Professional societies
- Political representatives
- Community participation

Fairness: Policy Choice

- Should health care workers and/or others receive special access to ventilators in a pandemic?

Arguments in favor:

- Health Care providers face risks
- Enhanced access needed to keep workers on the job

Arguments against

- Many workers face risks
 - First responders
 - Allied health professionals
 - Family care givers
 - Non-health workers with high risk

Arguments against

- Authors of rationing cannot place self at top of queue and expect public support
- Keep health care workers (and others) on the job with better protection, child care support, pay



Access based on employment denies access to
children, special target of pan flu

Consistency

- Across equivalent groups
- Across neighbor institutions
- Across regions

Conclusion

- Disasters are when we most need ethically sound planning and policies
- More work needed:
 - Rationing
 - Workforce issues
 - Community involvement
 - Consistency