

Fortnightly Digest by



(Digest 13)

Warm greetings!

The spread of the Covid -19 has been witnessed around the world since December 2020. But after a year of lockdown, various government and private institutions have come up with the vaccine to combat the spread of the virus. These vaccines were distributed at various timelines around the world. Vaccination not only provides a benefit to the individual being vaccinated but also confers a significant public health benefit by facilitating population immunity. But some institutions have been pushing to make vaccination mandatory - is this ethical? this is something which we all need to think about.

The United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS), is contemplating mandating COVID-19 vaccinations for health workers in the interests of patient safety. Compelling individuals to be vaccinated with candidate vaccines that have been granted emergency use approval based on limited data, and penalising non-compliance, raises challenging ethical issues. For instance, some individuals may wish to be vaccinated but may be hesitant to be vaccinated with particular vaccine candidates. On the other hand, some individuals may be averse to vaccination of any sort but may find themselves being forced to submit to vaccination in certain situational contexts to gain access to benefits or services. In all such instances, acquiescence and submission run counter to the notion of voluntariness, which is a central pillar of the doctrine of informed consent. While an increasing number of settings are taking the position that COVID-19 vaccinations will not be made mandatory, individuals could, nevertheless, be deprived of their right to insist on a vaccine of their choice, and face indirect compulsion to be vaccinated even if they prefer otherwise. Penalisation for non-compliance will further undermine the notion of voluntariness. To know more about this issue read the paper on "Acquiescence and submission to COVID-19 vaccination: ethics considerations"

Recently a prime-time TV show had telecasted a debate between Baba Ramdev & Dr. Jayesh Lele, the General Secretary of the Indian Medical Association, which was aired on 24th May 2021. In the video the secretary, accused Baba of attacking modern medicine to increase the sale of his product Coronil. But the IMA's opposition to Ramdev is based more on a

perceived insult and is a turf war. It is not about upholding science and attacking obscurantism. To know more about this read the review article written by Sanjay Nagral, Chair person, Forum for Medical Ethics Society.

We shall keep updating you on this front as it evolves and a forthcoming webinar on the theme.

Newsletter Spotlight

Covid-19 Mandatory vaccination

[April 27, 2021 | Wellcome Open Research | Acquiescence and submission to COVID-19 vaccination: ethics considerations \[version 1; peer review: awaiting peer review\]. | Jerome Amir Singh, Sunita S. Bandewar, Ana Palmero, Anant Bhan](#)

[December 9, 2020 | IJME | The legality of mandatory vaccination | Kushaan Dosajh](#)
Ayurveda vs modern medicine

[July 2, 2021 | The India Forum | In Dubious Battle: Ramdev versus the Indian Medical Association | Sanjay Nagral](#)

Online First from IJME

July 5, 2021 | [Narrative-based misinformation in India about protection against Covid-19: Not just another “moo-point”](#) | Beth Hurford, Abhishek Rana, Rohan Samir Kumar Sachan

June 28, 2021 | [Drug testing: Who pays? Who benefits?](#) | Nancy Olivieri

June 22, 2021 | [Reflective narratives during the Covid-19 pandemic: an outlet for medical students in uncertain times](#) | Manjulika Vaz

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