

Ethical dilemma in the clinical research

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Ethical dilemma in the clinical research Affiliation: There are several cases in the clinical trial period that lead to ethical dilemma on the part of the researchers. They have to decide to choose whether to do what is morally and ethically correct in which most of the times compromises the clinical trial in progress or just assume the ethics and continue with the clinical trials which may be considered inhumane but will eventually save money and time for the trials to continue (Barrett, 2006). There are several cases that cause ethical dilemma during clinical trial and some of them will be discussed shortly below.

The first is on the issue of disclosing all the information to the participants including all the risks of the trial or to just disclose the most important of the information and let the rest of the information be disclosed after the trial as a debrief. The dilemma comes in where the full disclosure of all the information to the participants may lead to some of them not giving informed consent and opting out in which case it will take longer to find others without any guarantee that they will also stay throughout the whole exercise. The lack of disclosure will lead to signing the consent and the trial continuing as scheduled (Gad, 2009).

The other ethical dilemma comes in in the issue of publication of the findings of the clinical trial. The clinical trial may be marked with several problems which may render the drug unfriendly to most people. If this information is released to the public through the findings, the drug may either be banned from manufacture and production or harm many people. On the other hand, the lack of issuing of publication will mean that no one will know of the drug and hence the whole process of research and trial will have just been a

waste of time and money and hence a loss which many pharmaceutical companies cannot handle (Verdu-Pacual and Ponce, 2001). They therefore have to make the hard choice of risking the lives of people and a future lawsuit by publishing or cutting their losses and going back to the drawing board.

Lastly is the issue of patent rights versus the rights of patients. A patent lasts for 4 years at which point it is given to another company or group. Every company wants to maximize these 4 years in order to have covered the expenses of production and made enough profit to sustain them (Lo, 2012). The dilemma comes in where in order to be able to do this within this short time, they have to overcharge the consumers for the drugs which is considered totally unethical and even inhumane and especially if the drugs are for a vulnerable and stigmatized group of people or disbursed to the third world nations that are short of money (Lo, 2013). They therefore have to choose on whether they will cut their losses and let whatever profit they will have made within this time to be enough and not overcharge the consumers or overcharge them for the future sustainability of the company once the patent rights are over.

References

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