THE ROLE OF MUSLIM HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS IN THE BIOETHICS DISCOURSE

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• Presenter is an employee of Astellas Pharma, Inc.
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BACKGROUND

What role do Muslim Healthcare providers play?

Individual level
- Content experts, Authors
- Consumers of discourse

Medical community level
- Professional healthcare societies

Community level
- Local and state ethics committees

INTRODUCTION

Clinical epidemiology and health services research

Evidence-based medicine and practice

Drug safety/Pharmacovigilance
- Application of epidemiological methods
- Safety signal detection and evaluation
- Risk management

Benefit/Risk analysis
Muslim Healthcare provider participation in bioethics
Discuss major risks (safety first)
Definitions of benefit and risk

Medical context
Islamic context

Benefits
Muslim
- Emotional attachment to the ideals
- Belief in the principles
Healthcare Provider
- Ability to frame questions
- Ability to provide context

Risks
Muslim
- Insufficient knowledge
- Misinterpretation
- Agenda
Healthcare Provider
- Questions may not be important
- Answers driven by context, instead of evidence
Definition of life
Differences in evidence
Context focused
Fatwa-based assessment (off label use)
**Life**

**Medicine**
- Life – 1 phase
  - Before birth
  - Life in the world

**Islamic Ethics**
- Life – 3 phases
  - Before birth
  - Life in the world
  - Life in the afterworld

**Standard**
- Improve quality of life
- Extends length of life
- End of life care

**End of life care**

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**Evidence**

**Medicine**
- Case series, observational studies, RCTs
- Apply methods for weighing evidence
- Consistency
- Causality, threshold
- Evidence evolves

**Islamic Ethics**
- Revelation
  - Quran
  - Sunnah
- Apply methods for weighing evidence
- Evidence static
- Context evolves requiring applying evidence to new circumstances

**Evidence evolves**
**USE OF CONTEXT**

**Medicine**
- Generate question
- Frame question
- Determine answer
- Apply answer

**Islamic Ethics**
- Generate question
- Frame question
- Determine answer
- Apply answer (fatwah)

**OFF LABEL USE**

**Assess drug efficacy and safety**
**Based on individual cases (anecdotal medicine)**
**Driven by context**
**Can provide useful information**
**Can mislead with regard to establishing best practice**

**Fatwa based reviews**
- Based on individual cases
- Contextualization of answer (hukm)
- May not directly reflect the answer
- Focus on exceptions, not the rule
- Hazardous if making policy
Life support

Fatwa allowed
Not reflective of the evidence, but based on a secondary consideration (e.g. eating pork when dying)
Primary evidence raises doubts

If one only studies fatwa
May surmise that it is allowed AND reflects the evidence – false assumption
Based on prior assumption, may lead to the impression that an obligation may exist

Muslim physician participation in bioethics
Discuss major risks (safety first)
Definitions of benefit and risk
Medical context
Islamic context
### Medicine

**Benefit**
- Improve QOL
- Prolong life
- Something that promotes or enhances well-being

**Risk (harm)**
- Decrease QOL
- Decrease life

### Islamic Ethics

**Benefit**
- Improve chances of salvation
- Something that promotes or enhances worship

**Risk (sin)**
- Decrease chances of salvation

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### Benefits

**Muslim**
- Emotional attachment to the ideals
- Belief in the principles

**Physician**
- Ability to frame questions
- Ability to provide context

### Risks

- Definition of life
- Differences in evidence
- Context focused
- Fatwa-based assessment (off label use)
- Definition of benefit and risk
OTHER ROLES FOR MUSLIM HCPs

Expand scope
  Professionalism
  Patient advocacy focus
Learning
  Facilitate interdisciplinary discourse
  Clean slate – no agenda
Partnerships