

# NATIONAL BIOETHICS COMMISSION OF MEXICO

## Recommendations regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, from a bioethical approach

### Contingency standards for healthcare

1. Protect the human rights and integrity of people, within a framework of interculturality, equity, non-discrimination and gender perspective.
2. In all interventions, consider optimizing the number of years of life saved and hospital survival.
3. Assess the person comprehensively, considering their biological age.
4. Ensure conditions for a dignified death, when it is not possible to cure.
5. Consult with the patient if they have an advance directive document.
6. Publicize criteria for making decisions with transparency, as well as safeguarding the confidentiality and protection of medical data.
7. Ensure quality health care in compliance with the principles of justice, solidarity and equity.
8. Consider respect for the autonomy and integrity of the personas a starting point for all medical decisions.

### Solidarity towards groups in conditions of vulnerability

1. Provide support for health professionals to prevent and address burnout syndrome and moral stress in decision-making in complex scenarios.
2. Adapt labor and social policies to the provisions set forth by the the General Health Council.
3. Offer mental health services to those who require it.
4. Guarantee the continuity of health care for women, girls and boys; as well as sexual and reproductive health services, prenatal and postnatal care.
5. Ensure resources for the prevention of contagion and, where appropriate, medical care for people confined in institutions.
6. Acknowledge vulnerability of doctors, nurses, medical students and those who take risks in the care and containment of the pandemic.

### Resource management in contexts of scarcity

1. Ensure the admission of patients to the ICU, and the triage process, based on the balance between cost and opportunity, in an equitable and impartial manner.
2. Adapt therapy to the evolution of the patient and avoid therapeutic futility.
3. Offer assistance alternatives to the Intensive Care Units in compliance with quality standards.
4. Follow the principles of transparency, proportionality and responsibility.
5. Communicate with the patient and family, in a clear and effective way, the possibility of a limitation of medical and human resources, as well as access to necessary supports to face the disease.
6. Promote educational actions that emphasize the importance of community health care and the management of limited resources.

### Planning and prevention

1. Establish a network made up of all health facilities with intersectoral guidelines and policies at the federal level to improve patient referrals.
2. Promote the participation of Mexico in the international efforts to address the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Support research as a mechanism to strengthen public health measures, under standards of research ethics and scientific integrity.
4. Establish consensus on the technical criteria that must be followed to contain the pandemic, based on the available scientific evidence.
5. Involve Bioethics Committees, considering the participation of citizens, for the analysis of the challenges in containing pandemic outbreaks and protecting health.
6. Ensure collaboration of a palliative care group to offer guidance for the medical team, patients and their families on their diagnosis, limitation of treatments and the possibility of medication to avoid suffering.
7. Implement, via the Hospital Bioethics Committees, a mechanism for addressing dilemmatic cases and guide the medical team in making urgent decisions.