PubPol 580 - Values, Ethics, and Public Policy, Fall 2009

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Biobanking: Honoring Donors ’ Rights
Biobank Basics

• Collection of biological material and data
• Information available for research
• Have existed since the 1800s
• Registries and surveys prompted recent attention
Questions of Morality

• Consent procedures
• Confidentiality
• Research results
• Incidental findings
Consent Procedures

• Blanket consent
  • No restrictions on researchers
  • European preference and emerging trend

• Tailored consent
  • Choices about research types
  • American preference
Consent Procedures

- Blanket consent disadvantages
  - The more general, the less informed
  - Only broad descriptions about the purpose are available
Consent Procedures & Confidentiality

- Tailored consent advantages
  - Types of research
  - Uses of data
  - International sharing
  - Commercial partners
  - Link data to personal and medical information
  - Can re-contact donors
Research Results

- Normally published long after the study began
- Published in science journals
- Not always published
  - No value
  - Misleading information
Incidental Findings

- Individual research participant
- Potential health or reproductive importance
- Discovered in the course of conducting research
- Beyond the aims of study
Reduced level of social benefit in return for honoring rights of donors
Biobanking: Honoring Donors’ Rights

Questions and Conversation