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

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http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/78190
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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