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