Ethical Challenges, Pitfalls and Promises of OneHealth

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Emerging and Reemerging infections - 70% vector-borne or zoonotic

- Bluetongue
- Rift Valley
- Usutu
- Alkhumra
- TBE
- Avian flu
- SARS
- Kyasanur Forest Disease
- Nipah
- Chandipura
- Barmah Forest
- O'nyong nyong
- Hendra
- Ross River

Legend:
- **Arthropod-borne**
- **Rodent-borne**
- **Other (including bats)**
Infectious diseases in the news
OneHealth
Not a novel insight...

Hippocrates,
Rudolf Virchow,
William Osler...
...yet new recognition and urgency

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**An evolutionary arms race**

The ongoing cycle of drug development and bacterial evolution

Thanks to an ever-increasing crop of drug-resistant bacteria, our best defenses against many, often deadly, infections are no longer working.

It is often described as an evolutionary arms race. Humans develop better antibiotics and bacteria evolve that can survive them. Humans develop better antibiotics, and the cycle continues.

If it is a race, humans are losing. Hospitals are increasingly breeding grounds for drug-resistant bacteria. More people now die each year of hospital-acquired infections than of car crashes, breast cancer, or AIDS.

**Infection protection**

"If you are going to the hospital to visit a friend, forget the dinner," says Betsy McCellan, PhD, founder of the Committee to Reduce Infection Deaths. "Bring a container of bleach wipes. Wiping the surfaces around the patient's bed could save their life."

Surgical site infections are another potential problem for hospital patients. William Robb, MD, chairman of the patient safety committee of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, suggests:

- If you have diabetes, make sure your HbA1c level is not high before surgery.
- If you smoke, quit. Smokers are at greater risk of surgical site infections.
- Albumin below 2 g/dL is a known risk factor. Ask your doctor to check yours.

**Off the words**

You can help alleviate the problem outside the hospital as well. The Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA) suggests:

- Practice good hygiene—wash hands with soap and water, not antibacterial agents.
- Use antibiotics exactly as prescribed.
- Never insist on antibiotics if your doctor says they aren't necessary, and they haven't asked. "While there is a real benefit to using antibiotics to treat diagnosed bacterial infections, these drugs will not help viral infections, such as colds," says Stuart J. Levy, MD, President of APUA.

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**BREAKING NEWS**

**ZIKA VIRUS SPREADING**

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**netherlands centre for one health**
One Health as a normative concept: implications for food safety at the wildlife interface

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Abstract

Starting from the recognition of the interdependence of human, animal, and ecosystem health, the concept of One Health is increasingly regarded by many as the key to dealing with global health challenges.
Beyond animal / veterinary ethics

- Public health ↔ animal ethics
- Veterinary ethics ↔ business ethics
- Environmental ethics ↔ animal/veterinary ethics
Importance of problematic context
Importance of problematic context

[Cartoon showing a celebration of the world population hitting 7 billion, with one character saying, "WORLD POPULATION HITS 7 BILLION!! LET'S CELEBRATE!"]

[Cartoon showing a character popping a bottle, saying, "POP!", and another character saying, "UH... THERE MAY NOT BE ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE..."]

[Cartoon with a headline, "'Next pandemic' could be man-made" and a picture of a man, with text about antibiotic resistance and the CDC's warning.

[Cartoon with a character saying, "HAPPINESS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!"]

[Cartoon with a character saying, "WORK HARDER"]

[Cartoon with a character saying, "EARN MORE MONEY"]

[Cartoon with a character saying, "BUY MORE THINGS"]

[Cartoon with a character saying, "KEEP GOING"]

[Logo of Wageningen University]
OneHealth and the pitfalls of specialisation

- Common issues in practical philosophy
  - Moral pluralism and cultural diversity
  - Collective action problems and shared responsibility
  - Ethics and political/democratic decision making
  - Ethics in a globalised world
  - Relationship between individual and collective
The fruits of collaboration

- Animal Ethics vs Environmental Ethics
- What is the locus of moral status?
- Insights from philosophy of public health might help
Some pitfalls of OneHealth

- Too broad?
  - A call for collaboration
  - A scientific insight
  - A conceptual (im)possibility?
  - A metaphysical view?
  - A moral belief?
OneHealth

- Harmony or trade-offs?
Some pitfalls of OneHealth

- In need of a new ethical framework?

maybe OneBioethics is just about morality in its broadest sense?
Implications for the future veterinary prof professional?

- Vets have traditionally endorsed idea of OneHealth
- Shared responsibility requires interaction with human health care, e.g. exchanging observations with GPs
- Can and must play role in questioning the assumption that public health always outweighs animal welfare
- Might need to engage more in ethics of public health
  - Ethics of business/agriculture/consumption
- Respond to zoonotics risk but take into account societal context that promote them

... ...
Thanks!

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