

Research protocols and Covid-19: elements for adequate patient information
Dott. Antonio Addis (Wednesday, January 27th 2021)

In this second meeting, Dr. Addis started from underlining the specificity of the information to the patient in the context of vaccinations against Covid-19. A first element to be addressed on an ethical level is the fact that information should not be understood in a defensive manner, but must be oriented towards effective understanding of the subject receiving vaccination. A second key point is the specificity of the information in the case of mass vaccinations, as is the situation of the vaccine against Covid-19 which must be administered to the entire population. In this context, to reach the goal of a correct and complete information, society itself (namely institutions and health institutions) should ensure dissemination of correct information. Only after correct and complete information, citizen can provide consent to the vaccination. Moreover, spreading correct information concerning vaccination is a critical resource in order to generate a counter action to the pandemic through the means of education of the population. In addition, vaccination in the case of Covid-19 has specific implications as it is necessary to achieve herd immunity. In this sense, the communication of data (or the absence of data) at a scientific level is particularly important and should be carefully addressed. The information campaign regarding vaccination should concern the whole population, at a national level (e.g. concerning Italy, the Italian Medicines Agency prepared a webpage in the institutional website, with Q&A concerning vaccination concerning Covid-19). In conclusion, scientific communication is an issue with important ethical implications; in the case of vaccine, it should specifically take into account communication of uncertainty. Finally, Dr. Addis focused on the ethical aspects of the so-called "Challenge studies" in the context of research for treatments against Covid-19.