

Navigating the ethical challenges of medication choices based on environmental impact

Joost D. Piët, Steven R. Kraaijeveld, Erik M. Donker, Milan Richir, Caroline T.A. Moermond, Amy Booth, Thijs H. Oude Munnink, Patricia M.L.A. van den Bemt, Lorena Dima, Ben J.A. Janssen, Mathilde Jalving, Tomás van Erden, Fabrizio de Ponti, Robert Likic, João Costa, Marc Labriffe, Charlotte Bekker, Carlotta Lunghi, Elisabetta Poluzzi, Michiel A. van Agtmael, Yolande Voskes Jelle Tichelaar | *The Erasmus+ PlanED Prescribing Consortium*

Background

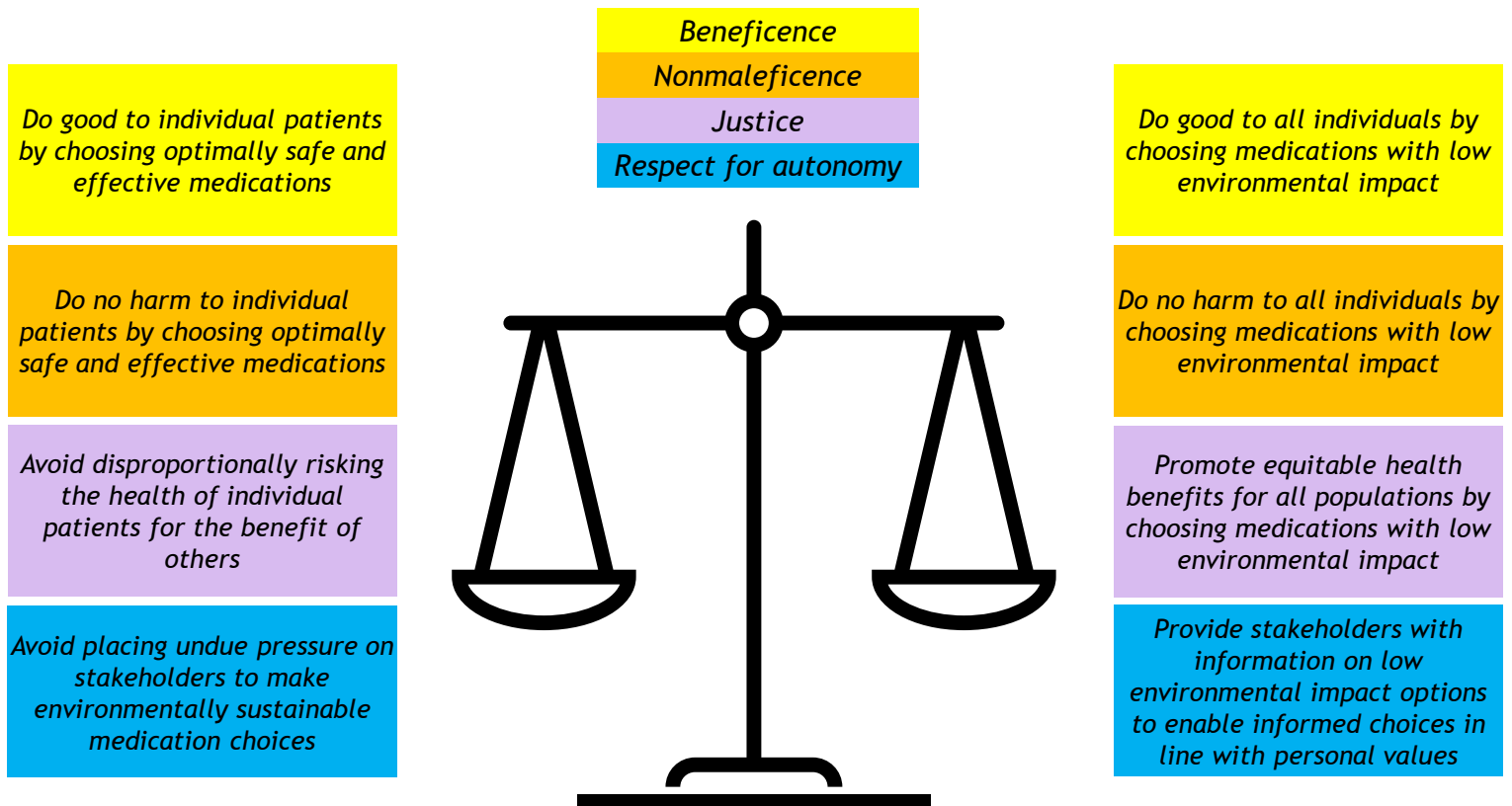
The environmental impact of medicines is a critical issue for public and planetary health. However, considering environmental impacts when choosing treatments with medication can present complex ethical challenges.

Key ethical challenges

- Weighing environmental considerations against other factors in medication choices.
- Deciding when it is desirable to share environmental considerations with stakeholders.

Objective

To analyse the ethical challenges for environmentally sustainable medication choices using established ethical principles



Conclusion

- Established biomedical ethical principles support the integration of environmental considerations into medication choices when appropriately aligned with individual values, which requires careful navigation on a case-by-case basis.
- To guide ethical decision making for environmentally sustainable medication choices, adequate policies are needed.

Policy recommendations

1. Increase transparency regarding the environmental impact of medicines
2. Invest in research on the environmental impact of medicines and how this can be considered in clinical practice
3. Encourage collaboration between stakeholders to develop an understanding of all values and a shared responsibility
4. Develop clear guidelines on how to ethically consider the environmental impact in medication choices