

## Transcript of Sridhar Venkatapuram on Social Identities

What we have seen is that in the United States, and in the United Kingdom in particular, the people that are dying are what we call BAME, or minority ethnic communities or older people or people with other types of chronic conditions.

The way that I would think about it is that what we have seen is that after lockdown the people that are dying are essentially the most vulnerable. So older people and minorities who have lots of different kinds of health conditions or were not able to protect themselves. So how should we think about this depends on what it is that you want to do or what you can so or what you're interested in.

So for me as an ethicist, as a philosopher, I have lots of different kinds of questions and lots of different kinds of evaluations about this.

On the one hand if I was purely a public health person, as I've been trained in, my concern would be how do we protect people from these communities from getting sick. So right now under lockdown I would be making an effort to try to protect all the groups that seem to be over represented in the deaths because they're clearly, what that's showing, is that they have increased vulnerability.

The second part is that as we lift the lockdown what that mean is that these groups are going to die ever more because if they're dying during lockdown, if you lift them up then the risk factors go up not less. So we need to think, ah, about that is whether our government is thinking about decreasing their vulnerability. From an ethical point of view, and I think that, this is probably one of the most difficult things to say, is that what we are seeing is that certain groups of people are dying preventable deaths. So what does this mean for health justice and what does this mean for the future of the way that we think about health and minorities in this country. Already we know that minorities and those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to get sick and die earlier and what this epidemic has done is essentially show us, in an acute situation, the same thing. Is that the sick, the impaired, and the socially disadvantaged die faster.

And so this is an incredibly powerful moment for galvanised social activism towards addressing the health and vulnerability of the worst off in our society.