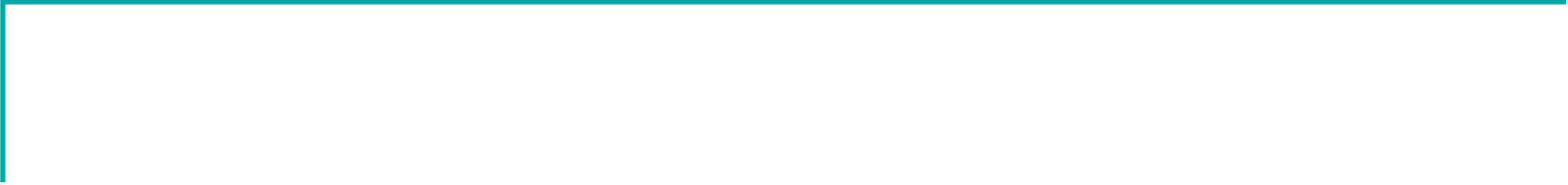

Understanding Resource Allocation Decisions of Public Health Officials in the US

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Background & Motivation

- Study of ethical issues in public health practice. Resource allocation decisions emerged as a major theme
 - Dirth of empirical evidence about allocation. Enormous variation in funding sources and spending, yet little specificity about
 - Allocation decisions and processes
 - Officials' discretion in allocation decisions
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Resource Allocation Decisions as Ethical Issues

- Choosing among populations/programs
 - Questioning role/scope of public health
 - Little discretion in allocation of funds
 - Focus on allocating practitioners' time
 - Allocating scarce resources
 - Variety of values underlying decision making
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Resource Allocation Decisions as Ethical Issues (cont.)

- Resources Used to Resolve Ethical Challenges
 - Consultation with colleagues
 - Reliance on personal experience
 - Reliance on personal moral grounding
 - Almost no use of formal frameworks
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Research Objectives

- Describe nature and scope of resource allocation decisions officials confront
 - Identify processes officials use to make allocation decisions
 - Assess degree of discretion officials report in allocating resources
 - Explore whether discretion affects officials' abilities to meet public health needs
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Methodology

- National survey of local public health officials
 - Sample stratified by size of LHD
 - n=1290
 - Survey domains
 - Types of allocation decisions
 - Processes used to make allocation decisions
 - Degree of discretion in allocation decisions
 - Effect of discretion on ability to meet needs
-

Methodology (cont.)

- Link survey data with data from 2008 NACCHO Profile of LHDs
 - Source of funds
 - Governance
 - Programs/Activities
-

Analytic Plan

- **Descriptive Statistics**
 - Types of resource allocation decisions
 - Processes used to make allocation decisions
 - Amount of discretion
 - **Multivariable Model**
 - Discretion as dependent variable, with LHD size, governance and funding mix as independent variables
 - Discretion as independent variable
-

Questions or Comments?
