Among the most important of the immediate lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic is a stark demonstration of how unfair our society is. People of color, people with disabilities, and people living at the margins of poverty have endured greater levels of death and disease from the virus than other U.S. populations. How much of this difference in outcomes is related to the health care system is unclear; the obligation of clinicians and hospital administrators to minimize such disparities is uncontroversial. One issue that has gained national attention is whether seemingly neutral health care policies, such as allocation of scarce resources through “crisis standards of care” guidelines, inadvertently exacerbate differences in outcomes by reinforcing fundamental social inequities. This Dialogues focuses on a research project examining population-level outcomes of a “neutral” ventilator allocation policy.

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Dialogues in Research Ethics is a series of monthly seminars. For more information, phone UM Ethics Programs at 305-243-5723 or E-mail ethics@miami.edu.