

Science and Ethics of “Curing” Misinformation | Journal of Ethics | American Medical Association

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A growing chorus of academicians, public health officials, and other science communicators have warned of what they see as an ill-informed public making poor personal or electoral decisions. Misinformation is often seen as an urgent new problem, so some members of these communities have pushed for quick but untested solutions without carefully diagnosing ethical pitfalls of rushed interventions. This article argues that attempts to “cure” public opinion that are inconsistent with best available social science evidence not only leave the scientific community vulnerable to long-term reputational damage but also raise significant ethical questions. It also suggests strategies for communicating science and health information equitably, effectively, and ethically to audiences affected by it without undermining affected audiences’ agency over what to do with it.

[...]

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