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News

WHO wades into row over sharing of H5N1 flu research

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The World Health Organization has expressed concern that US attempts to block publication of aspects of recent research on the H5N1 avian influenza virus may undermine an international agreement on sharing information on the virus. The research relates to genetic mutations that might increase the virus's risk of transmission to humans.

WHO raised its concerns in a statement released on 30 December (www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2011/pip_framework_20111229/en/index.html) and urged that information gathered through such research be shared in the manner delineated in its pandemic influenza preparedness (PIP) framework (http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA64/A64_8-en.pdf), which came into effect in May 2011.

The framework was negotiated to meet the concerns of several nations in Asia, where most new strains of flu first emerge, that they were ...

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