

Inclusion of Pregnant and Lactating People in Clinical Trials: Surveying the Legal Landscape

Leslie Meltzer Henry, J.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Law, University of Maryland Carey School of Law
Core Faculty, Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics

National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine
Forum on Drug Discovery, Development, and Translation
June 16-17, 2022



Mapping the Landscape: Overview



Caution: Complexities of the Legal Terrain



Legal Factors that Slow or Halt Inclusion



Pathways Forward



Anticipating Legal Changes Ahead



Complexities of the Legal Terrain

Different Legal Regimes

Pregnancy / Lactation

- **Human subjects research regulations**
- - 45 C.F.R. 46, Subpart B
- **Liability for harm**
- - Prenatal v. postnatal

*Drugs / Vaccines

- Drug development and approval regulations**
- NDA v. BLA
- Liability schemes**
- Private v. public

Non-Public Health Emergency (PHE) / PHE

- FDA development and approval process**
- Emergency Use Authorizations
- Liability Schemes**
- Immunity from liability for activities related to medical countermeasures

* Generally small molecule



Legal Factors that Can Slow or Halt Inclusion

Legal considerations can influence decisionmaking at every stage of product development.

-- Mastroianni AC, Henry LM, et al. (2017).

- Regulatory ambiguity
- Perceptions of liability
- Risk management challenges
- Risk shifting and the "learned intermediary doctrine"
- Venue specific laws



Pathways Forward and Anticipating Changes Ahead



Pathways Forward

- Regulatory revisions
- Regulatory guidance
- Research and education related to liability
- Investigate feasibility of various injury compensation schemes
- Legal / financial incentives

Changes Ahead

- Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization
- State law changes