Twitter Thread by Whitney R. Robinson



Whitney R. Robinson
@WhitneyEpi

Not quite. I'm arguing that they did the best that they legally could when constrained by bad policy. These are hard ethical calls. Do you continue working for an org that you think is heading in the wrong direction, or do you try to do your best from inside?

@Justfirenews I think about this a lot. For instance, my university brought back uni students for in-person learning last fall w no surveillance testing or modified housing. I thought that was a reckless decision. But I didn't quit my job...

@Justfirenews Partially bc the balance of the work my colleagues were doing locally, nationally, & globally was so important and I could support that in a small way. Also income and longterm professional goals that I think will help public health beyond covid.

@Justfirenews I think my position is justified. I think the work of many of my applied public health colleagues has been heroic and harm-reducing.

@Justfirenews But I recognize that there are always ethical minefields. For instance, finders. My research is mostly supported by the federal government. I think it's ethical to use that money for my work. But what about Department of Defense? They also...

@Justfirenews ...fund a lot of important work but I know some people who don't think it's ok to take that money. What about private foundations that support causes I find antithetical to my values? There's at least two times I didn't apply for something bc of the funders.

@Justfirenews ...but I understand why someone else would. And I understand that others may feel my own partnerships with government funders are not maximally ethical. These are real questions.

@Justfirenews But my interactions with low- and mid-level federal, state, and local applied public health folks don't fall into this camp. From what I've seen, these people have behaved heroically in the midst of an awful situation...

@Justfirenews like medical providers forced to do triage bc they don't have the staff, supplies and support they need, applied public health folks have been forced into situations with tradeoffs they should not have had to make. It's very very

heavy.

@Justfirenews But they are too busy working their a**es off to be on Twitter explaining good all themselves. So I feel called up give witness to what I've seen of their work. It's moving. As bad as it is, it could have been even worse. They are the best of us.

@Justfirenews So many typos. But hopefully the message comes through.