

Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Biostatistics

At Warp Speed: Statistics and COVID-19 Vaccine Development

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ABSTRACT

One of the best hopes we have of returning life to normal is to bring a safe and effective preventive COVID-19 vaccine to market and make it available to just about everybody around the world. We are in the middle of an unprecedented effort to bring such a vaccine to market. After a recent pressure campaign led by academic scientists, vaccine developers have made public the protocols for their Phase III trials. The release of these protocols has ignited a fierce debate as to whether the designs are appropriate and sufficiently safe-guarded from political pressure for vaccine approval. In this talk I will discuss a few of the complex issues involved in designing Phase III COVID vaccine trials, touching on some key statistical aspects of the trials along the way.