International Collaboration in Stem Cell Research

The Hinxton Group Process

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Categories

Stem Cell Research Policy

- **Permissive** (e.g., SCNT is specifically permitted under certain conditions)

- **Permissive Compromise** (e.g., SCNT is prohibited; hESC research using supernumerary IVF embryos is specifically permitted or not prohibited)

- **Restrictive Compromise** (e.g., hESC research only permitted using cell lines created before a certain date)

- **Prohibitive** (e.g., research using embryos or cell products derived from embryos is prohibited)

- No specific policy
**Asia & Oceana**

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Europe

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Middle East & Africa

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The Americas

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The Challenge

- Ethically and politically controversial research
- International discordance in regulation and legal status of hESCR
- Complicated by international nature of scientific publication and collaboration
Questions

- Is forum shopping okay?
- Whose laws?
- Scientific integrity?
- Ethical integrity?
- Is international policy possible? Desirable?
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Charge

1. Identify the primary challenges faced by scientists, universities and journal editors with respect to international collaboration in SCR
2. Determine the extent to which it may be possible to develop guidance for conduct that could be useful across national boundaries and national legal regimes
3. Explore the role of oversight and data sharing in international research
4. Identify forward-looking strategies to foster the scientific and ethical integrity of research in a global context
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- ~50 scientists, ethicists, lawyers, policy makers and journal editors
- 14 countries
- 22-24 February 2006
- The Wellcome Trust’s Conference Centre, Hinxton, Cambridge, UK
The Hinxton Group

- Consensus statement DRAFT
- Discussion of case studies
- Break-out groups
- Plenary sessions
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Consensus Statement

- Principles
- Forward-looking strategies
- Next steps
Consensus Statement

Principles

1. Minimize harm; risk commensurate with overall benefit

2. Lawmakers should be circumspect when regulating science; when enacted, laws should be flexible

3. Clear and explicit laws

4. Where international collaboration is not prohibited by law, research institutions should neither discriminate against nor restrict freedom of investigators
5. Circumspection in restricting extraterritorial research

6. Consultation among scientists, policymakers and the public

7. Journal editors should encourage inclusion of descriptions of author roles in published research
8. Submission of cell lines to national or international depositories that subscribe to internationally accepted standards of quality and make lines publicly available

9. Journal editors should support and promote high standards of scientific peer review; require verification of authenticity; compliance with good cell culture practice; source of cells specified
10. Journal editors should support and promote high standards for ethical integrity in SCR; compliance with local policies; declaration of COIs; request protocols, consent forms, etc., where appropriate

11. Human materials donors in hESCR should be regarded as human subjects

12. Creation of a public database for hESCR-related protocols, consent documents, etc.
Consensus Statement

13. Further development of guidelines for ethical conduct of hESC research and clinical trials

14. Funding bodies must take adequate steps to satisfy themselves that those they fund intend to conduct their research ethically and in compliance with local and national policy and international guidance

15. Research institutions and labs should provide opportunities for scientists and trainees to engage in ethical discussion, review and education
16. International efforts to engage in “ethical forecasting” to identify future and emerging issues and address them before they materialize

17. Development of international consensus around ethical standards and practices in hESCR

18. Collaboration of international collection of scientists, philosophers, bioethicists, lawyers, clinicians, journal editors and regulators, in consultation with the public to develop such standards

19. Above process should include concerted efforts to engage the global public in honest and realistic conversations about hESCR


www.HinxtonGroup.org
The End