ETHICS IN RESEARCH

In biomedical research it is often necessary to use animals or humans. Whether this is justified is usually based upon the question "Does the potential benefit of this research outweigh any potential harm that might arise from undertaking this research?"

Before research using any animals can be undertaken, approval must be obtained from an Animal Welfare Committee in accordance with strict guidelines formulated by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. Since animals cannot contribute to this debate and particularly because they are unlikely to benefit directly themselves from such research, this committee has a special responsibility to consider the rights of animals

Human Experimentation
There is community concern about the possible abuses of human experimentation. An extreme example was the experiments in the concentration camps revealed by Nazi doctors at the Nuremberg trials. This led to ethical guidelines for human research outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki in 1964. Ethics committees were set up by Institutions to look after the interests of patients and other research subjects. The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia now requires approval from an ethics committee before research is undertaken.
Welcome to the Centre of Human Bioethics

Dear visitor,

Thank you for taking the time to visit the Monash University Centre for Human Bioethics (CHB). You will find here information about our Research activities and postgraduate Degree Programs. Our continually evolving and growing Resources section has proven very popular with our visitors. We hope it will be of assistance to you, too. The annual Intensive Bioethics Course the CHB holds on Mount Buffalo Chalet attracts visitors from far-flung places to Australia, including the UK, South Africa and Hong Kong.

Monash Bioethics Review is edited by Merle Spriiggs and Deborah Zion and published by the Centre for Human Bioethics (CHB). Monash Bioethics Review is Australia's oldest and its only peer reviewed bioethics journal. It appears four times a year in January, April, July and October, and is sent free of charge to Associate Members of the CHB. Contributions of original articles are welcome, and should be submitted on A4 paper, double spaced, accompanied by a disk indicating the word-processing programme that has been used. Notes should be in a separate document. Contributions should be sent to:

Justin Oakley or Deborah Zion
Editor Monash Bioethics Review, Centre for Human Bioethics, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, Australia 3800.

Some back issues of Monash Bioethics Review, and its precursor Bioethics News, are available for purchase from the Centre. Enquiries concerning this matter should be directed to:
In our society there are many moral dilemmas. There is usually no absolute clearcut answer to these problems. A decision can only be reached after extensive discussion and a weighing up of the pros and cons in light of the prevailing value systems of the society. Compromises have to be made. Usually the extreme viewpoints have to give way to middle ground. The extent to which those making a decisions will personally have to bear the consequences and responsibilities of that decision should also modify the decision.

Examples are situations such as
- abortions,
- euthanasia,
- death penalties,
- medical intervention.

A great deal of interest in ethics arose in Melbourne in response to the In vitro fertilisation programmes as these raised many previously unencountered legal and moral issues, such as surrogacy, and the rights and disposal of frozen embryos. This led to the establishment of the Monash Centre for Human Bioethics which has been very active in stimulating debate. Clearly, not everyone will agree on what is best (and whose rights should be given most consideration? - the individual, the family of the affected person or society?). There are conflicting philosophical viewpoints e.g the Sanctity of life versus the consequentialist view of Quality of life.
Human Ethics: Forms, Guidelines & Policy Documents

- Application Form to Undertake Research Involving Human Subjects [RTF]
- Administrative Procedures and Guidelines for Completion of Application Form
- Guidelines to Assist in the Preparation of Information Sheet and Consent Form
- Administrative Procedures for Annual Reports, Amendments and Adverse Events
- Code of Practice for the use of Name-Identified Data and Covenant of Confidentiality [RTF]
- DNA Information Leaflet and DNA Consent Form [RTF]
- Human Research Ethics Committee Eligibility Criteria
- Guidelines for Human Research Ethics Sub-Committees (HRESCs) [RTF]
- Meeting dates and submission deadlines for 2003
- NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans
HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION

MEDICAL RESEARCH
Clinical trials
Gene therapy
*In vitro* fertilisation
Use of human tissue (including foetal material)
Analysis of blood components/genes
Access to genetic registers

EPIDEMIOLOGY
Interviews or questionnaires
Surveys
Access to medical records

SOCIOLGY  ANTHROPOLOGY  HISTORY
PSYCHOLOGY  HUMAN MOVEMENT
MANAGEMENT  LAW  MUSIC
ARCHITECTURE  ENGINEERING

VULNERABLE GROUPS

Children (studies in schools)
Aborigines
Mentally ill, unconscious or critically ill
People in dependent relationships
  elderly, doctor/patient or teacher/student relationship,
  wards of state, prisoners, members of the services,
Human Research Ethics Committee (constitution)

Role
2. In considering the implications of proposed research projects, the committee must determine whether the research reflects the basic ethical values of integrity, respect for persons, beneficence and justice.

Membership
4.(1) The committee comprises:
   (a) the following appointees of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation):

   (i) a **laywoman** who has no affiliation with the University, is not currently involved in medical, scientific or legal work, and is from the community in which the University is located;

   (ii) a **layman** who has no affiliation with the University, is not currently involved in medical, scientific or legal work, and is from the community in which the University is located;

   (iii) **two medical graduates** with knowledge of, and current experience in, the professional care, counselling or treatment of people;

   (iv) a **researcher** with knowledge of, and current experience in, the areas of research that are regularly considered by the HREC;

   (v) a **behavioural scientist** with knowledge of, and current experience in, the areas of research that are regularly considered by the HREC;

   (vi) a **minister of religion**, or a person who performs a similar role in a community;

   (vii) a **member of the Law School teaching staff**; and

   (b) up to four **co-opted members**, if required for balance or specific expertise.