

Healthcare Ethics Committee (HCEC) of NBC

Tuesday, November 26, 2013, 9.00 am to 11.30 am (Meeting # 5)

Venue: CBEC-SIUT, Karachi

Present: Aasim Ahmed (AA), Haroon Ahmed (HA), Aamir Jafarey (AJ), Shaukat Jawaid (SJ), Farid Khan (FK), Abdul Ghani (AG), Farhat Moazam (FM)

Via Skype: Asma Humayun (AH) and Saima Parvez Iqbal (SPI)

Invited guest: Raza Rehman (RR)

Minutes: by FM

1. Welcoming guest:

The minutes were approved.

FM welcomed RR (psychiatrist and medical educationist, DUHS) invited to the meeting at the suggestion of HA to obtain his input and suggestions for the mental health section of the ethics guidelines being developed. RR mentioned that PMDC has allowed 5 universities (Ripha and Shifa in Islamabad, DUHS and Ziauddin in Karachi) to develop their own modular curriculum for their medical schools, and he is involved in doing so for DUHS.

2. Review of minutes from previous meeting, matters arising:

a) Modifications requested from HCEC members to their sections in the ethics guidelines document were completed in time and have been incorporated in the next draft by Shahid Shameem (to be discussed today).

b) FM informed members that NBC has elected 3 new members for slots that had opened up. These are AJ (surgeon, CBEC-SIUT, Karachi), Mahjabeen Khan (gynecologist, DUHS), and Farah Qadir (behavior sciences, Islamabad). It was noted that once again there was no one from Balochistan and KPK.

Unfortunately, there has been no further progress in obtaining a PMDC representative for NBC, much needed also as member of HCEC.

c) Dr. Huma (NBC Secretariat) has emailed approval for HCEC to proceed with planning the Quetta workshop but has not yet responded to FM's request that some idea about the budget available be conveyed to us.

3. Ethics workshop for Quetta, Balochistan in 2014:

HCEC members agreed that as in many other areas, the province of Balochistan has also been neglected when it comes to ethics related education. Since its inception, it was noted that NBC has organized only one ethics workshop (about 3 years ago) in that province. There was unanimity by the group that we proceed with one in 2014.

While discussing the format, content, logistics, etc. of the workshop, useful input was provided by AG who is with the HRD in Quetta and one of the 6 members of the Provincial NBC of Balochistan which is chaired by the DG Health (currently Dr. Naseer Baloch). The following matters were discussed and agreed upon –

Days, time, duration: Two days to be selected in either the last 2 weeks in February or first 2 weeks in March 2014. Days on which flights are available for Quetta will need to be factored in. The first day will run from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and the second could end around 2.00 pm.

Format and content: This should be a “workshop on bioethics” and will aim at introducing the basics of research and clinical ethics with an emphasis on the latter. Discussions about cases relevant to local situations/realities will be emphasized rather than didactic lectures.

Participants: These should be limited to 25-30 and include those willing to attend both days. Participants should include all members of the Provincial NBC, members of local ethics committees (if any) and others actively involved in education of undergrads and postgraduate students related to healthcare. (Pathologist Ghulam Peerkani, chair of ethics committee, Bolan Medical College was mentioned – he has just contacted AJ for CBEC’s December bioethics conference.) “Political” invitations to professors/heads of departments not meeting these criteria should be avoided as much as possible.

Teaching faculty: Volunteers from HCEC include AA, AJ, and FM. NBC can suggest other names but it is requested that they be those experienced in running/ facilitating ethics workshops.

Venue, accommodations: The workshop should be held in a teaching institution. Faculty should be provided safe, clean accommodation rather than a stay in 5 star hotels.

Logistics, communications with Quetta colleagues: An official letter about the intent to hold the workshop should be sent ASAP to the DG Health/chair of the Provincial NBC from the NBC Secretariat. FM will follow up with direct contact with the DG to discuss details and arrangements. **All communication with DG should be copied to AG** who will serve as the liaison between HCEC and Quetta.

Budget: NBC Secretariat to enable and provide

Task: Attention is requested from the NBC Secretariat to expedite matters connected to the Quetta workshop, and to include this as agenda item for discussion and approval in the NBC meeting scheduled in Lahore for Dec. 5, 2013.

4. (Continuing) discussion on undergrad ethics guidelines draft:

Sections of the most recent, modified draft, compiled by Shahid Shameem and AJ, were discussed at length.

** General recommendation – It was felt that too lengthy a document may be “intimidating” especially to those not familiar with teaching ethics and so it should be split into two. One should contain the guidelines (objectives, content, etc.) and the other constituted as a “handbook” for teachers (appendices, reading material, cases, etc.)

Task: AJ and Shahid Shameem will be responsible for this before the next HCEC meeting.

** Points raised about the mental health section included – it was still too ambitious and lengthy for undergrad levels; it requires to be formatted along the lines of those employed for other sections; items 19 and 20 (page 20, 21) should be pruned (by deleting content outline “Ten Basic Principles, WHO) and combining the two items as one under “Legislation and Ethics of Mental Health Care;” more relevant cases (4?) for student discussion are required.

Tasks: 1) HA, AH, and RR will review, modify, and submit draft to FM and AJ – deadline Dec. 10, 2013, and 2) AH will email PMDC document she has which lists time allocation for subjects, including ethics, to FM and AJ

** Public health section (page 19) – environmental ethics (page 22) should be merged into this section. Two to three cases for student discussion are also required for this section.

Task: SPI will be responsible for doing this. Deadline - December 10, 2013

** Physician pharmaceutical interactions (page 17) – This requires reformatting.

Task: Shahid Shameem to take care of this matter.

5. AOB:

AJ informed the group about CBEC’s international bioethics conference on “Emerging Ethical Issues” scheduled for Dec.6-7, 2013. All HCEC members are most welcome to attend any of the sessions and to bring along students and colleagues. However participation in the CBEC Forum

(with Dr. Healy) on Dec. 7 from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm is by invitation only. HCEC members wishing to attend must email and register themselves at cbec.siut@gmail.com

The next HCEC meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 from 9.00 am to 11.00 am in CBEC-SIUT.