

**Healthcare Ethics Committee (HCEC) of NBC**  
**Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 9.00 am to 11.00 am (Meeting # 6)**

**Venue:** CBEC-SIUT, Karachi

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

**Via Skype:** Asma Humayun (AH)

**Regret:** Dr. Farid Khan (FK)

**Minutes:** by FM

**1. Review of minutes and matters:**

Minutes of the November 2013 meeting were approved without changes. There were no matters arising from them. All members had completed tasks assigned to them.

**2. Relevant points from NBC meeting of Dec. 28, 2013:**

FM informed HCEC members that this was the first NBC meeting, held in Karachi, that had taken place with a member (Dr. Bhutta) chairing it rather than a government representative (who as usual was unavailable). NBC approved requested change in the name of the “clinical committee” to HCEC, as well as HCEC plans for organizing an ethics workshop in Quetta this year. It was also agreed that AG will serve as the Quetta contact person for HCEC in this activity.

The issue of absence of a PMDC representative in NBC (and HCEC) was also discussed. Dr. Huma Qureshi (HQ) promised to write to Dr. Raja Amjad, the new PMDC registrar, to attend the Feb. HCEC meeting. Unfortunately, despite her doing so it has clearly not had any effect. It was pointed out by HCEC members that PMDC is currently embroiled in protests against its elections results which have been challenged in court.

**3. Proposed 2014 Bioethics Workshop in Quetta:**

Members were updated that following HQ’s letter to the DG Health of Baluchistan, Dr. Nasir Baloch, FM had written to the gentleman advising him of the proposed workshop but received no response. AG who had been sent a copy of FM’s letter had then approached the DG directly and found him to be supportive. The DG also gave AG a list of 12 institutions/heads (copy of list provided by AG for HCEC files) from where he said people could be nominated to register for the workshop. The DG referred the case to Dr. Farooq Azam Jan, Director Health Services

Quetta Division, with whom AG is in contact and to whom FM spoke on the phone subsequently.

Unfortunately, according to AG, much has transpired since then. Soon after, the DG was replaced by Wahid Baloch, the deposed DG obtained a stay order from the courts, and is back in the DG office (together with Wahid B) but without authority to make any decisions until the court case is settled between the two.

HCEC members believe that until the Balochistan DG (also chair of the Provincial Bioethics Committee) matter is resolved, it will be difficult to proceed with a workshop which is also meant to educate and strengthen PBC members. Therefore it will probably be the second half of 2014 when the workshop may be possible. In the meantime, AG was requested to speak with Dr. Farooq Azam Jan, brief him of today's HCEC proceedings, and begin discussing with him the logistics of the workshop whenever it will take place – suitable venue, preferred participants, safe accommodations for teaching faculty, etc.

**Task:** AG will keep in touch with FM about progress in his discussions with Dr. Azam Jan

#### **4. Undergraduate ethics guidelines document discussion:**

A) The failure of PMDC to provide the registrar as representative in HCEC to help with this task was discussed. AH suggested that perhaps help could be sought from General Rehan Burney appointed by PMDC to oversee undergraduate and postgraduate education. His cell phone is 0300-545-5555.

**Task:** FM will try and contact General Burney by phone or email to see if he can be of assistance.

B) AJ went over with members the modified document, now split into a “guidelines” text with objectives and content and a separate resource “Handbook” for teachers, as recommended by HCEC in the last meeting. The continuing assistance of Dr. Shahid Shameem in formatting the two documents was appreciated by members.

Following a discussion on the Handbook section, the consensus was that – a) links be provided to resources instead of complete texts to avoid making the document too bulky, b) more resources/cases/links be included in the Handbook and c) AJ's chapter (to be published as part of a book soon) re. basic information about bioethical issues be included (as hard copy) as resource for the Introduction section of the guidelines.

**Tasks:** Following members will provide additional material for their sections –

- \*\* Clinical Ethics – AJ and FM. AJ will get permission from publishers to include his chapter
- \*\* Medical Error – AA
- \*\* Teaching and Training – SPI. (**Suggestion:** Consider changing name of this section to something more suitable)
- \*\* Organ Transplantation – AJ and FM
- \*\* Human Subject Research – AA
- \*\* Public Health – SPI

**Note: These materials for the Handbook should be emailed to FM at [cbec.siut@gmail.com](mailto:cbec.siut@gmail.com) no later than Friday, Feb. 28, 2014**

C) The guidelines and references related to Mental Health section, and what and how much and what is sufficient for undergraduate levels, were discussed by HA and AH at some length. It was decided that HA would review again the Dec. 12, 2013 Mental Health draft and send his suggestions to AH. They will communicate with each other over this week and turn in the final draft for inclusion in the document.

**Task:** The final, agreed upon Mental Health guidelines, as well as final Handbook materials, to be emailed to FM by HA / AH no later than Friday, Feb. 14, 2014

**5) AOB:**

The next HCEC meeting was scheduled (tentatively) for Tuesday, August 12, 2014 following end of Ramzan. The date will be confirmed later.