

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD QUARTELY NATIONAL BIOETHICS COMMITTEE
(NBC) MEETING
Nov 1, 2017, Marriot Hotel, Karachi.**

Third quarterly meeting of the National Bioethics Committee (NBC) was held on Nov 1, 2017 in Marriot Hotel Karachi at 10:00am. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Dr Farhat Moazam, Chair HCEC as the Secretary MoNHSR&C could not attend the meeting.

Following members attended the meeting:

1. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Executive Director, Pakistan Health Research Council/ Member Secretary NBC.
2. Prof. Dr. Farhat Moazam, Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Culture, Karachi
3. Prof. Dr. Aasim Ahmad, Dean and Chief Nephrologist, The Kidney Centre, Karachi
4. Prof. Dr. Aamir Mustafa Jaffaery, Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Culture, Karachi
5. Maj. Gen (Retd) Salman Ali, Representative CPSP
6. Dr. Muhammad Akhlaque, Director General Health Services Sindh
7. Dr. Jamshed Akhtar, Professor and Head of the Department of Pediatric Surgery, National Institute of Child Health, Karachi
8. Dr. Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, Representative Director General Health Services, Punjab
9. Dr. Inayatullah Memon, In charge Department of Bioethics and Medical Education, Indus Medical College, Tando Jam
10. Dr. Saima Pervaiz Iqbal, Associate Professor, Shifa College of Medicine, Islamabad
11. Dr. Manzar Anwar Khan, Khyber College of Dentistry Peshawar
12. Dr. Ghulam Murtaza, Focal Person, Representative, DGH Services Sindh
13. Dr. Muhammad Hayat Roonjho, Focal Person, Representative Director General Health, Baluchistan
14. Dr. Lamia Mahmoud, Rep. WR, WHO, Islamabad
15. Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Focal person, Representative Director General Health Services, KPK
16. Mr. Ehsan Ali, Representative Secretary Health and Population GB
17. Dr. Sahibzada Muhammad Khalid, Focal person, Representative, Director Health Services, FATA.
18. Dr. Farkhanda Ghafoor, Head Clinical Research and laboratories PKLI
19. Brig ® Razia Ishfaq, Registrar, Pakistan Nursing Council, Islamabad

20. Mr. Abdul Ghani Sasoli, IPH, Quetta
21. Dr. Faiza Bashir, Focal Person, NBC Secretariat, Pakistan Health Research Council, Islamabad.

Members who sent their regrets to the NBC Secretariat prior to meeting

1. Maj. Gen. Sohail Aziz, Advisor in Cardiology AFIC Rep of Surgeon General/ DG (MS-IS), Pakistan Army.
2. Prof. Dr. Abid Farooqui, Focal Person President PMDC
3. Chief Executive Officer DRAP
4. Dr. Ambreen Munir, LUMHS, Jamshoro
5. Dr. Salman Ahmed Tipu, Vice Dean, Isra University, Islamabad
6. Prof. Dr. Munir A. Saleemi, Lahore University, Lahore
7. Chief Executive Officer, DRAP, Islamabad

Members who were absent

1. President, Supreme Court Bar Association, Islamabad
2. Director General Health Services, AJK
3. Chairman, HEC
4. Dr. Tariq Mehmood Mian President, Pakistan Association of Family Physicians

The meeting started with recitation from the Holy Quran. Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Member/Secretary NBC welcomed participants, and this was followed by the introduction of the members. Dr. Moazam welcomed the presence of a WHO member after an absence from several NBC meetings, and invited Dr. Lamia Mahmoud, the new representative, to become a regular attendee.

Agenda Item-1: Approval of the minutes of 2nd Quarterly NBC Meeting held on Aug 17, 2017:

The Member Secretary informed that the minutes of the 2nd Quarterly meeting held in Quetta on Aug 17, 2017 were circulated to all attending members and after incorporating their comments the draft minutes were signed by the Chair, Dr. Aasim Ahmed, and circulated to all NBC members.

Dr Moazam asked that as was the practice in the past, the draft minutes should be first sent to Chairs of both Subcommittees for information and review before circulating to NBC members. Member Secretary agreed that this should be done.

Decision:

1. Draft minutes shall be reviewed by both the Chairs of NBC subcommittees before sending to the NBC Members for review.
2. Minutes were approved by NBC members.

Agenda Item-2 Briefing on the actions taken on the decisions of the last NBC Meeting.

The members were briefed about the NBC activities along with the status of the actions taken in the last NBC meeting held in Quetta on August 17, 2017.

Agenda Item-2.1: Ex officio members to nominate permanent focal persons:

In response to the letters written by the Ministry to all Ex officio members to nominate one permanent focal person for NBC, Member Secretary informed that all Ex Officio members have sent their nominations.

Agenda Item-2.2: Compliance by AKU and Shifa Hospital regarding submission of research projects to NBC:

Shifa Medical University and AKU had expressed reservations about sending required research projects to NBC for review. Dr Saima Parvaiz and Dr Aasim Ahmed, REC members of Shifa and AKU respectively, had been requested to raise this issue and get a letter of agreement from the institutions.

Dr Aasim stated that this matter had been discussed in the AKU REC and that all projects that need an NBC clearance are now being submitted for NBC review. Dr Saima Pervaiz clarified that this was also discussed with and agreed to by the Shifa REC and PI, however obtaining a formal letter from the Vice Chancellor may not be possible. Member Secretary suggested that if the two RECs ensure that NBC clearance is sought for appropriate research proposals, then a formal letter of agreement from these institutes should not be considered mandatory.

Decision:

Letter of agreement from institutions is not mandatory if their RECs are making sure that their projects needing NBC clearance is done.

Agenda Item-2.3: Subcommittee meeting regarding endorsement of “Handbook for Introducing Bioethics to Medical and Dental Students”

Member Secretary informed that for the endorsement of the Handbook for introducing Bioethics to Medical and Dental students, the Secretariat contacted Dr Abid Farooqui Vice President PMDC thrice. On the first contact he was out of country, second time he informed that this matter had been referred to PMDC’s Curriculum Committee. A reminder letter on the progress was also sent recently to which no response has been received.

Dr Moazam added that she too had personally contacted Dr Abid on this matter and was told that the Guidelines and Handbook were now with the PMDC curriculum committee but they had not yet taken up this matter. When she had impressed on him the importance that he attend NBC meetings to provide updates, Dr. Abid had complained that as NBC meetings are frequently delayed, not planned of time and dates shifted, insufficient time is available for members to organize their schedule to be able to attend. She pointed out that this has been equally problematic for other members this year, and emphasized that NBC meetings be announced well ahead of time to avoid such issues in future.

Member Secretary stated that the Secretariat is ready to organize the meeting between PMDC and relevant HCEC members whenever PMDC representatives are available.

Decision:

1. Secretariat to contact PMDC and HCEC to solicit a mutually convenient date for the meeting pertaining to the HCEC Bioethics Guidelines document.
2. Secretariat shall announce the dates for next NBC meeting and send an invitation to Dr Abid with a special request to attend the meeting and present the updates.

Agenda Item-2.4: Subcommittee meeting regarding implementation of “Guidelines for ethical interactions between Physicians and Pharma Industry/ Trade”:

NBC has developed above guidelines which need to be implemented through Pharma Bureau (PB) and Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA). NBC members (Drs. Aasim and Moazam) therefore met the representatives from PB and PPMA on June 16, 2017 at Kidney Centre Karachi. The pharma representatives wanted to develop short and long-term action points for implementing the above guidelines. The issues highlighted in PPI guidelines like gifts, sponsorships, CMEs and conflict of interest were discussed. PPMA and PB agreed to discuss these issues in their board meeting and give a feedback to NBC in 4-6 weeks.

Member Secretary informed that upon inquiry regarding progress on this matter it was informed that Chairman PPMA Dr Kaiser Waheed has been replaced and Secretariat contacted both the organizations twice regarding update. Dr Naveed Masoom from Pharma Bureau expressed his willingness to attend the NBC meeting and present the progress and will do so after completion of the formal proceedings of today’s meeting.

Agenda Item-2.5: Subcommittee meeting with DRAP regarding Clinical Trials:

Consequent to the decision of last NBC meeting Secretariat inquired the DRAP policy board’s decision regarding the Establishment of Clinical Trials registry as well as obtaining the ethical clearance for all the drug trials from NBC to which it was informed by Sheikh Ansar Director DRAP that the issue of handling of Clinical Trials/Trial Registry and Ethical Clearance from

NBC, has been addressed in the revised Bio-study Rules, 2017 and the same, now has been cleared from DRAP and are finally submitted to Policy Board for its concurrence.

Member Secretary also informed that the DRAP has got the “Ethical Criteria for Pharmaceutical Regulations 2017” as gazette notified regulations which were made available to the Chairs and soft copy will be circulated to all members. Responding to this Dr Moazam said that it is too a short time to comment on these regulations. The notification shall be circulated to the NBC members and discussed in the next meeting as a separate agenda item.

Decision:

1. “Ethical Criteria for Pharmaceutical Regulations 2017” shall be presented as a separate agenda item in next NBC meeting.

Agenda item No 2.6: Progress on Provincial and Regional Bioethics Committees (PBC)

Agenda item No 2.6.1: Progress on PBC Punjab.

PBC Punjab had to share the minutes of their 2nd Meeting which were received by Secretariat.

Agenda item No 2.6.2: Progress on PBC Sindh:

Secretariat was to work with Dr Ali Akbar for organizing the HCEC bioethics workshop together with the third quarterly NBC meeting in Jamshoro. However, due to change of Head of PHRC (who is the Member Secretary NBC) this process was delayed. When the DG Sindh office was finally contacted there was no response from Dr. Akbar. Therefore, the workshop could not be organized, and the Member Secretary NBC decided to shift the NBC meeting to Karachi instead of Jamshoro.

The recently appointed DG Health Sindh Dr. Muhammad Akhlaq Khan, who was present in the meeting, apologized for non-response from his office and admitted that PBC Sindh was not working in proper way. He has now designated Dr Ghulam Murtaza as the new focal person for NBC and hoped that in future matters will run more smoothly with the help of Sindh NBC members Dr Ambreen and Dr Inayatullah Memon as resource persons. He expressed his willingness to organize the bioethics workshop in Jamshoro as soon as possible.

Dr Moazam stated that, with current HCEC commitment for workshops for FATA and KP, the Sindh workshop would take place sometime next year.

Decision:

1. The bioethics workshop for PBC Sindh will be held following the workshops for KP and FATA.

Agenda item No 2.6.3 Progress on PBC Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP):

Dr Muhammad Saleem has been nominated by DG Health as permanent focal person for KPK.

Agenda item No 2.6.4: Progress on RBC GB:

Mr. Ehsan Ali, Representative Secretary Health and Population GB,

Agenda item No 2.6.6: Progress on FATA:

The timing of bioethics workshop for FATA will be confirmed in today's meeting.

Agenda item 2.7: Bank account of NBC:

Member Secretary explained the relevant provision of PHRC Act which provides for creation of a Medical Research Fund and there is no provision to have a separate NBC account, but NBC amount balance would be known. All the fees and donations received by the Council shall be deposited in that fund. Regarding lapsing/surrendering the NBC unspent money at the end of the financial year to GOP, Member Secretary stated that PHRC for the time being has no intention to surrender the funds generated by NBC. Member Secretary further committed to initiate a draft case for creation of this fund and refer it to Ministry before the end of November. He further stated that special provisions shall be made for incurring expenditures on NBC meetings to maximally facilitate the members and keep them comfortable.

Decision:

1. Member Secretary will initiate a draft case to Ministry for creation of Medical Research Fund before the end of November.

Agenda item 2.8 a: NBC meeting with Foreign Office:

A meeting of the NBC members with Foreign Office representatives was held on July 5, 2017 at PHRC Head office had discussed the amendments suggested in HBM Guidelines by Foreign Office. A draft document was prepared by NBC by incorporating ~~all the~~ amendments/changes and was shared with Foreign office. The representative of foreign office after considerable time recently resent the document with additional changes/suggestions. AA informed that he was unable to review that document.

Decision:

1. Secretariat and AA will review the document with changes and suggestion and once finalized will share with the NBC for final approval.

Agenda item 2.8 b: Export of Non-research HBM samples:

Regarding the issue of identifying institutions for giving ethical clearance for the export of non-research Human Biological Material the Secretariat had written letters to the National Institute of Health (NIH) and all provincial Governments. The impression seemed to be that such export clearances should also be issued by NBC.

Dr. Moazam clarified once again that NBC is an advisory body and its responsibility is neither to make rules and regulations nor to regulate/clear export of materials. It is the Foreign Office and the government that should be dealing with these matters. Dr Aasim Ahmed seconded her opinion and stated that the continuing confusion should be put to an end and that if the material is a non-research material it does not require NBC's approval.

Decision:

1. The Secretariat to clarify that the matter should be dealt with by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Provincial Governments.

Agenda item 2.9: Election of new members:

After deferring the elections for the induction of new NBC members the process was reinitiated. The results and outcome were discussed in detail under agenda item scheduled for today's meeting.

NEW AGENDA

Agenda Item-1: Report by REC:

Prof Dr Aasim Ahmed briefed the members on REC composition and working and explained that in last 10 months 56 new projects were received by REC, of which 32 were approved 15 were in process and 8 were pending on the part of PI.

Dr Aasim Ahmad pointed out that due to increase in the turnover of projects for approval he needs active participation from all the members of REC which is still not there despite repeated reiteration. It was suggested that if any member does not or cannot contribute his/her REC membership should be rescinded.

It was pointed out that only one focal person appointed to NBC Secretariat functions, which is insufficient to cope with the increasing load of REC projects and other NBC activities. Dr Aamir suggested that suitably trained persons with familiarity with bioethics should be hired. He also proposed financial incentives for REC reviewers through the money they generated through reviews. Dr. Moazam expressed her strong reservations about providing financial incentives for REC members, stating that this would lead to similar questions for those shouldering other responsibilities in NBC.

Dr Mukhtar Ahmad stated that he agreed with the fact that the NBC Secretariat lacks proper structure and his plan is to expand Secretariat soon and prior to the end of his tenure this month.

Decision:

1. Proper NBC Secretarial structure will be put in place in two weeks' time and members will be notified.

Agenda Item-2: Report by HCEC:

Dr. Moazam stated that several requests are pending for the HCEC to conduct bioethics workshops and that a long-requested workshop for FATA takes priority. As the next NBC meeting will be held in Peshawar, a suggestion was made for organizing a joint workshop for KPK and FATA concomitant with that. Focal persons Dr. Saleem (KPK) and Dr Sahibzada (FATA) agreed with this suggestion.

Decision:

1. A joint bioethics workshop for RBC FATA and PBC KPK will be organized in Peshawar together with the next NBC meeting.

Agenda Item-3: Election of new NBC members:

Member Secretary informed the house that for the 2vacant member positions the Secretariat received a total of 45 nominations with CVs from academic institutions and NBC members. Votes were received from 8 NBC members. One nominee received maximum votes but there was a tie between 2 others for the second vacancy. Member Secretary stated that as there was no NBC TOR guidance in what to do in the case of a tie, this required a solution.

Dr Moazam stated that the primary issue for NBC should be that of a total of 30 members only 8 (4 elected and 4 ex officio) bothered to vote. This reflected a poor sense of responsibility on the part of those who did not vote. In her opinion, due to the poor voting response, the election results should be considered null and void. There was a consensus among members that this be done and the election take place again.

The discussion uncovered possible reasons that may have contributed to fewer voters including lack of awareness on part of recently appointed ex-officio members they too are expected to vote. Dr Lamia Mahmoud pointed out that the nominees' CVs and templates sent by the Secretariat were voluminous but of little help to ascertain suitability for NBC membership. Dr Jafarey agreed and added that some CVs he looked at included fake/false information re. bioethics activities while others included no relevant information at all.

Dr. Jafarey recommended that the Secretariat be provided with a staff member with appropriate bioethics background/experience to review the CVs, extract authentic, relevant information and compile a one-page summary for each nominee. This, along with the CVs, should be sent to NBC members. This suggestion was supported by the Member Secretary and other NBC

members. Dr. Moazam stated that the Secretariat had turned to the chairs of REC and HCEC for issues they faced in the past two election cycles and suggested that the one-page summary be sent to them for review prior to finalizing it.

Decision:

1. Due to the low participation rate, the result of current election process was declared null and void by consensus.
2. The Secretariat will work on compiling an authenticated, relevant one page summary from the CVs of nominations received and forward to HEC and HCEC chairs for review.
3. Following this step, the Secretariat will reorganize a re-election for the vacant membership positions.

Agenda Item-4: Reports on Provincial and Regional Bioethics Committees:

4.1 PBC Punjab:

Dr Muhammad Saeed Akhtar presented PBC Punjab report. He briefed the house on the progress with a Facebook page of PBC has created, and a website under development which will be launched in 1st week of December. He also informed that a dedicated email address has been generated for PBC (provbioethicscommitteepunjab@gmail.com) and REC of PBC (researchethicscommitteepunjab@gmail.com). A library in PBC Secretariat is also under consideration. He also requested a re-fresher bioethics training workshop for orientation of PBC members.

While appreciating the progress of PBC Punjab the Member Secretary stated that having a gmail account is not a good idea. Secretariat is trying to shift on a server based database and shall extend the domains for PBCs as well. This will enable the secured and reliable database for all NBC and REC activities. He also emphasized that Punjab is a big province and participants for the bioethics workshop should be invited from other towns and cities of the province and not merely from Lahore. The other members and Chair seconded his suggestion.

Decision:

1. NBC shall provide the server based domains to PBCs for reliable and efficient working.
2. Bioethics workshop for PBC Punjab will be organized with the next NBC meeting to be held in Punjab.

4.2 PBC Sindh:

Dr Ghulam Murtaza stated that as he was given the responsibility of being the focal person for NBC just before this meeting, so he does not have a detailed report/ information. However, he expressed his commitment towards organizing the PBC Sindh in a better manner than before.

Decision:

1. The orientation session for PBC Sindh will be organized after the workshop for KP and FATA, tentatively in March.

4.4: PBC Baluchistan:

Dr Muhammad Hayat Rhujio informed the committee that PBC Baluchistan held its fourth formal meeting on Sep17, 2017. Further Institutional ERC & HCECs are established at SBKWUB, BMCH Quetta, Nursing Directorate Quetta, BIPBS Quetta, BINUQ Quetta. It has also issued the letters to the remaining Heads of Institutes of Baluchistan for establishment of Institutional Committees for REC & HCEC. PBC has also developed and finalized the 1st draft of the Booklet on Curricula/Policy for Medical Professionals, Nurses, Paramedics, and Students which will be endorsed in the next meeting. Further they have also formulated the TORs of IERCs which shall be shared with PBC members for endorsement in their next meeting in Nov 2017.

Dr Moazam appreciated the efforts of PBC Baluchistan and inquired whether the curriculum/policy doc pertained to bioethical issues. If so, the functions and practice of the groups he mentioned were far too different to have one doc that could cover all of them. She suggested that PBC take input from relevant people in each group and also share the draft with the NBC before finalizing it. Mr Abdul Ghani Sassoli, NBC member from Baluchistan, stated that he had not seen the doc and expressed willingness to review and help with its drafting. Dr Moazam commented that Mr. Ghani has a postgraduate diploma in bioethics and is actively involved in teaching nurses and paramedical staff, and his input would be useful. Dr Hayat agreed to share the draft with NBC and welcomed the participation request of Dr Ghani.

There was a discussion about the bioethics workshop organized in Quetta with the last NBC meeting. NBC members (Drs. Aasim, Aamir, and Jamshed) who facilitated the workshop expressed profound dissatisfaction with the choice of venue (Gardenia Hotel located in periphery of city) and arrangements for the workshop as well as stay in Quetta. There was poor attendance in the workshop, participants were not those mentioned in the list, and only a few PBC members attended.

Member Secretary apologized for the discomfort caused due to inappropriate choice of venue for the NBC meeting and workshop and promised that suitable provisions shall be made with appropriate cover of expenditures under new PHRC rules.

Decision:

1. Dr. Rhujio will send minutes of the PBC meeting, and others that may follow, to NBC as all provincial committees are required to do.
2. Dr. Rhujio will forward the proposed curricula/policy draft doc to NBC for circulation to members for their input. He will also send the draft to Mr. Ghani Sasoli and incorporate him as member of the committee finalizing the doc.

3. The NBC Secretariat will ensure that all NBC meetings and bioethics workshops are organized in well reputed venues to avoid discomfort to NBC members in future.

4.5: PBC KP:

Dr Muhammad Saleem said he was appointed permanent focal person the day prior to this meeting and so does not have a report to submit. He stated that PBC KP is in place but has not yet met.

Dr Saleem will organize the next NBC meeting in Peshawar and collaborate with Dr Sahibzada for arranging a two-day training workshop for PBC and RBC members.

4.6: RBC Gilgit Baltistan:

Mr Ehsan Ghani apologized for continued absence of a representative of GB in last two meetings as the Secretary GB was called away at the 11th hour to attend meetings in Ministry. He has discussed with the Secretary that he be designated to attend all future NBC meetings to maintain continuity.

4.7: RBC AJK:

No representative attended the meeting.

Agenda Item-5: Dates for the next NBC Meeting:

It was decided that the next NBC meeting will be held in Peshawar in 2nd / 3rd week of Feb 2018 together with a 2-day joint bioethics workshop for KP and FATA.

Decision:

1. Secretariat will suggest a couple of dates of next NBC meeting after consultation with Secretary Health. Members expressed a preference for the 3rd week of Feb 2018.
2. The proposed dates will be circulated to NBC members no later than first week in January 2018 to allow them sufficient time to plan their schedules.

Agenda Item- 6: Any Other Business:

6.1: Agenda of NBC Meeting:

It was discussed that, as was being done in the past, the agenda of NBC meeting should be finalized after first circulating a draft to the REC and HCEC chairs for their input. NBC members can also request the Secretariat to incorporate in the agenda an item they believe needs discussion.

Decision:

Agenda for NBC meetings shall be finalized after consultation with the Chairs of NBC Subcommittees.

6.2: Regional EMRO Summit on Bioethics:

Dr Aasim Ahmed attended the EMRO region National Ethics Committee (NEC) meeting in April 2017 in Muscat Oman where he had put forward that Pakistan would like to bid and hold the next regional NEC meeting in 2019.

AJ pointed out that in a recent meeting in Cairo he was informed that Lebanon may be hosting the 2019. He further elaborated that a small group was constituted in Oman to work on it which never met as there was no chair nominated so he is not sure of the status at this stage. It was pointed out by the Member Secretary that Secretariat shall write to the Ministry for intimation and approval of holding this Summit and arranging for its logistics and local hospitality once we have the final status by Dr Aasim Ahmad.

On behalf of CBEC, Dr Aamir Jaffaery extended the full logistic support within Pakistan including the arrangement of venue accommodation and meals for the participants. Dr Mukhtar raised his doubt that the foreign delegates might not be cleared to attend the Summit in CBEC as they are only allowed to come to UN cleared venues in Pakistan. He further requested Dr Aasim to write a draft of proposal for Secretariat to take this issue with the Ministry for approval.

Decision:

Dr Aasim Ahmed will draft a proposal (in the next week) for holding EMRO Regional Summit in Pakistan for the Secretariat to discuss with the Ministry.

6.3: Code of Ethics for interaction on Social Media:

Dr Saima Perwaiz raised the recent issue of a doctor's firing from his job based on his use of social media to interact with the patient. She noted the absence of guidance on this issue for physicians despite increasing social media utilization in Pakistan. Dr Mukhtar appreciated her concern and suggested that this issue needs framing of the problem to come to the resolve. Dr Moazam recommended that Dr Saima undertake a scoping exercise re. international codes of conduct and present this in NBC.

Decision:

1. Dr Saima will get information on this issue as suggested and present this for discussion in the next NBC meeting.

6.4: Subcommittee Meeting regarding "Guidelines for ethical interactions between Physicians and Pharma Industry/ Trade"

Dr Naveed Masoom Ali representative Pharma Bureau attended the NBC session in the last to brief the Committee on the progress regarding implementation of the Guidelines by NBC. Dr Masoom briefed the house that consequent to the meeting with NBC the PB and PPMA were expected to carry out certain measures to curb the inappropriate interaction between Industry and Physicians. For this Pharma Bureau has come up with Code of Pharmaceutical ethics which have

been shared with the Secretariat. He expressed the willingness to hold an orientation session of Pharma Companies heads, institutions and NBC Members at the date and time convenient to all stakeholders. He also briefed the committee that upon his inquiry and search pharma companies take the ethical approvals of respective IRBs but NBC approval is sometimes not sought. He understands the requirement but mentioned a delayed process of getting NBC clearance as a factor refraining from obtaining this.

To this Dr Aasim Ahmed mentioned it as the mandatory requirement notified by Federal Government to obtain NBC clearance for any drug trial to be carried out by foreign funding or is multi province and explained that NBC clearance process only takes 4-6 weeks which is not a lengthy process.

Dr Masoom stated that he was not aware of this fact and requested NBC to recirculate the notification for wider dissemination.

Decision:

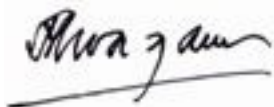
1. Orientation session will be held with stakeholders from Trade and Industry on date and time convenient to all stakeholders.
2. Secretariat will recirculate the notification of “Obtaining the Ethical Clearance from NBC as a mandatory requirement” with Trade and Industry stakeholders.

6.5: End of NBC Tenure of Prof Dr. Aasim Ahmed:

The Member Secretary announced the completion by Prof Dr Aasim Ahmad of two terms as a valuable member of NBC and Chair REC, and thanked him for his invaluable service to NBC. His long standing voluntary contributions to bioethics in Pakistan and in making NBC a strong body were also recognized by the Chair and all members. Dr. Aasim was presented a memento in recognition of his services.

By consensus, NBC members requested Dr. Aasim that he continue to serve as co-opted member of REC for the time being, a request that he accepted graciously.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks from the Chair.



Prof. Dr. Farhat Moazam

Chairperson HCEC

Member NBC