

HFEA Licence Committee Meeting

22 June 2009

21 Bloomsbury Street London WC1B 3HF

Minutes – Item 1

Wessex Fertility Centre (0057) – Licence Renewal

Members of the Committee:	Committee Secretary:
David Archard (lay) – Chair	Kristen Veblen
Jennifer Hunt (counsellor)	
Hossam Abdalla (clinician)	Legal Adviser:
	Mary Timms, Field Fisher
	Waterhouse
	Observers:
	Mark Bennett, HFEA
	Peter Thompson, HFEA

Declarations of Interest: members of the Committee declared that they had no conflicts of interest in relation to this item.

The following papers were considered by the Committee:

- papers for licence committee (36 pages)
- no tabled papers.

The Committee also had before it:

- HFEA Protocol for the Conduct of Licence Committee Meetings and Hearings
- 7th edition of the HFEA Code of Practice
- Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 (as amended)
- HFEA (Licence Committees and Appeals) Regulations 1991 (SI 1991/1889)
- Decision Trees for Granting and Renewing Licences and Considering Requests to Vary a Licence; and
- Guidance for members of Authority and Committees on the handling of conflicts of interest approved by the Authority on 21 January 2009.

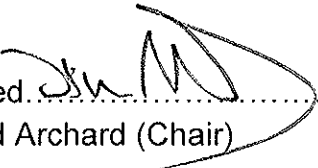
1. The Committee noted that the Centre was first licensed in 1992 and that the Centre's current licence would expire at the end of July.
2. The Committee considered the papers, which included the renewal inspection report, the renewal application form and previous Licence Committee minutes from 12 May 2008.
3. The Committee noted that the renewal inspection had taken place on 7 April 2009 and that improvement was required in the following areas:
 - establishment of a Quality Management System (QMS) and review of that system, in accordance with Standard 9 of the 7th Code of Practice
 - provision of counselling facilities compliant with the 7th Code of Practice, S.6.3.5
 - regular competence assessments of staff as described by 7th Code of Practice, S.6.2.9.
4. The response of the Person Responsible (PR) was noted by the Committee. It was considered to address the three breaches identified by the inspection and to outline planned action within a reasonable timeframe, in line with that recommended by the Executive.
5. In particular, the Committee was pleased that prompt action had been taken in relation to provision of more suitable counselling facilities and that the completion of the QMS process had been restarted following the inspection.

The Committee's Decision

6. The Committee noted that there were no issues regarding the character, qualifications or experience of the Person Responsible or her ability to perform her duties under section 17 of the HFE Act 1990 (as amended). The Committee agreed that the PR had throughout her tenure discharged her responsibilities as PR satisfactorily and the Committee was satisfied she continued to be a suitable PR.
7. On the basis of the information provided by the report, which demonstrated that the Centre's premises met the statutory requirements and had been shown to be fit for purpose (apart from the counselling facilities, which had now been addressed by the Centre), the Committee was satisfied of the suitability of these premises.
8. The Committee agreed that it was satisfied that the breaches in relation to the Centre's practices had been, or were in the process of being corrected

and on this basis agreed that it was satisfied as to the suitability of the practices used by the Centre.

9. The Committee noted that it was in receipt of a signed application form and that the relevant fee had been paid.
10. Although satisfied with the response of the PR detailing progress in relation to the breaches, the Committee remained particularly concerned that a QMS was not yet in place and fully implemented at the Centre, and had not been checked by the inspectorate to ensure that it was in place and fully implemented. For this reason the Committee decided to grant a licence for a period of three years, rather than five, without any additional conditions.
11. For the same reasons, the Committee recommended that the Executive inspect the Centre within a period of 12 months from the grant of the renewal to ensure that suitable action had been completed in relation to counselling facilities, staff competency assessments and in particular the Centre's new QMS.

Signed  Date 7/July/09
David Archard (Chair)