

# Licence Committee - minutes

## Centre 0017 & 0246 (Newcastle Fertility Centre at LIFE & Francis Crick institute) Research Project R0152 – Variation of research objectives – Executive Update

Thursday, 12 January 2017

Church House Westminster, Dean's Yard, Westminster SW1P 3NZ

Committee members	Andy Greenfield (Chair) Lee Rayfield Ruth Wilde Kate Brian Anita Bharucha	
Members of the Executive	Siobhain Kelly Dee Knoyle	Interim Head of Governance Secretary
Legal Adviser	Eve Piffaretti	Blake Morgan LLP
Observers	Bernice Ash	Committee Secretary

### Declarations of interest:

- Members of the committee declared that they had no conflicts of interest in relation to this item.

### The committee had before it:

- 8th edition of the HFEA Code of Practice
- Standard licensing and approvals pack for committee members

### The following papers were considered by the committee:

- Executive update
- Research Licence – Project R0152 – Centre 0017
- Licence Committee minutes 10 November 2016

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## 1. Background

- 1.1.** On 8 September 2016, the Licence Committee considered a variation of research objectives for research project R0152, which is conducted across two centres, Newcastle Fertility Centre at LIFE, centre 0017 and the Francis Crick institute, centre 0246. The committee was satisfied that it had adequate information to support this application. However, the committee requested that the Person Responsible (PR) provides more detail about the need for extra embryos and how they will be obtained, as this would be in the public interest.
- 1.2.** On 10 November 2016, the Licence Committee considered Dr Choudhary's (the PR at centre 0017) response:
- The committee noted that the centre believe that extended culture of human embryos has the potential to be a useful model for studying heteroplasmy due to mtDNA carryover. The PR stated that it is a recent development in the field and is not yet very efficient, and the centre therefore anticipate that additional embryos will be required during the optimisation procedure. The committee was satisfied with this response.
  - The committee noted that the PR confirmed that the main source of embryos for optimisation of extended culture will be those donated by patients who no longer want to keep their frozen embryos in store and the PR reported that the supply of embryos from this source has increased in recent years, believed to be related to the success of the centre's blastocyst culture and vitrification programme, which has seen an increase in pregnancy rate and an increase in the proportion of embryos suitable for cryostorage. The committee was satisfied with this response in relation to 'frozen' embryos and noted that information on how the centre would obtain additional 'fresh' embryos was not provided, and therefore requested this information.

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## 2. Consideration of application

- 2.1.** The committee noted the PR's response in the executive update.
- 2.2.** The committee noted that the PR has confirmed that the additional fresh embryos, if created, would be from voluntary egg donors who choose to donate eggs for research.

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## 3. Decision

- 3.1.** The committee was satisfied with the PR's response.

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## 4. Chair's signature

- 4.1.** I confirm this is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signature



Name

Andy Greenfield

Date

26 January 2017

**Update for Licence Committee  
12 January 2017**

<b>Centre number</b>	0017
<b>Centre name</b>	Newcastle Fertility Centre at LIFE
<b>Person responsible</b>	Dr Meena Choudhary

<b>Centre number</b>	0246
<b>Centre name</b>	The Francis Crick Institute
<b>Person responsible</b>	Dr Kathy Niakan

**Amendment to Research Project R0152:**

**Background**

1. At its meeting on 8 September 2016, the Licence Committee was informed of an amendment to research project R0152 held at the above centres.
2. Whilst the Committee was satisfied they had adequate information to support this application, it requested 'the PR supply more detail about the need for extra embryos and how they will be obtained as it believes this would be in the public interest.'
3. The following response from Dr Choudhary was considered by the Licence Committee at their meeting 10 November 2016:
4. 'Why are additional embryos required?  
We believe that extended culture of human embryos has the potential to be a useful model for studying heteroplasmy due to mtDNA carryover. However, it is a recent development in the field and is not yet very efficient. We therefore anticipate that additional embryos will be required during the optimisation procedure.'
5. 'Where the extra embryos will come from?  
The main source of embryos for optimisation of extended culture will be those donated by patients who no longer want to keep their frozen embryos in store. The supply of embryos from this source has increased in recent years. We believe that this is related to the success of our blastocyst culture and vitrification programme, which has seen an increase in pregnancy rate and an increase in the proportion of embryos suitable for cryostorage.'
6. The committee was satisfied with the centre's explanation regarding how the centre would obtain additional frozen embryos. However, the committee noted that the centre did not provide any information regarding how the centre would obtain additional fresh embryos.

7. In response, Dr Choudhary has provided the following comment for the attention of the Committee:  
'The additional fresh embryos if created would be from voluntary egg donors who come forward to donate eggs for research'

**Dr Douglas Gray**  
**Inspector**