



### **Media Release**

## **Human Biological Material: Recommendations for Collection, Use and Storage in Research**

The Irish Council for Bioethics has produced a report entitled *Human Biological Material: Recommendations for Collection, Use and Storage in Research* which will be launched by an Tánaiste Ms. Mary Harney, Minister for Health and Children on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

The issues raised by the controversy surrounding organ retention have heightened public awareness and concern regarding the use of human biological material in medical research.

Central to the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects is informed consent. Therefore the issue of informed consent forms the core of this report. Other important issues, which are discussed, include confidentiality and privacy, the commercialisation of human biological material, intellectual property rights and patenting and the storage and disposal of biological material.

Mr. Asim A. Sheikh B.L., chairperson of the working group said "this report will assist in the formulation of good practice guidelines and in the continuing debate and discussion of this important subject that is so vital to medical research and also and ultimately to better healthcare. He said that the report discusses universal norms in relation to human biological samples which will assist researchers and research ethics committees dealing with this issue. The report also contributes to the formulation of a better relationship between researchers and those who get involved in research by promoting a clear exchange of information between the parties."

Until now, Ireland lacked comprehensive guidance with respect to the ethical conduct of research involving human participants. The Council is hopeful that the recommendations contained in this report will facilitate and promote high quality ethical research.

The Irish Council for Bioethics established a working group to examine this area and following a comprehensive evaluation of international best practice and a wide-ranging discussion by the Council, has produced this report.

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