Working committees involved with the review of National Statement Chapters 3.4 & 3.6 and the development of *Chapter 3.4: Human biospecimens in laboratory based research*

2009 – 2012 Triennium

A subgroup of the [2009 – 2012 Australian Health Ethics Committee](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au) undertook the initial stages of this review. The subgroup included:

- Dr Nikolajs (Nik) Zeps
- Mr Graham Douglas-Meyer
- Rev Dr Gerry Gleeson
- Prof Paul Griffiths
- Prof Margaret Otlowski
- Prof Loane Skene

A/Prof Megan Munsie was also engaged as an independent expert to assist the subgroup with this review.

Interests were declared at the beginning of each meeting or teleconference, and managed in accordance with the requirements of the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992*.

2012 – 2015 Triennium

The [Human Biospecimens Working Committee](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au) was formally appointed under Section 39 of the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992* at the beginning of the 2012 – 2015 triennium. In accordance with NHMRC’s *Guideline Development and Conflict of Interest: Identifying and Managing Conflict of Interest of Prospective Members and Members of NHMRC Committees and Working Groups Developing Guidelines* policy, potential Members were required to disclose their relevant interests. The Chair and the appropriate NHMRC delegate considered the declared interests and determined that:

- no declared interests precluded the appointment of any of the prospective members;
- the declarations provided support for appointment of the prospective members, given their expertise in the subject matter; and
- the declaration and publishing of interests would serve as the management plan for any perceived conflicts of interest which might arise.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Relevant Experience</th>
<th>Declaration of Interests</th>
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| **Dr Nikolajs (Nik) Zeps**  
(Chair)  
*Group Research Coordinator*  
*St John of God HealthCare*  
*Adjunct Associate Professor*  
*School of Surgery*  
*University of Western Australia*  
& *Notre Dame Medical School* | ▪ Member of the Australian Health Ethics Committee (2006 – 2012)  
▪ Head of a translational research program at St John of God HealthCare (SJOGHC), which is integrated into clinical care. This work has included establishing a research biobank, a molecular diagnostic service and the provision of laboratory services for clinical trials for a large private metropolitan hospital  
▪ involved in human research ethics since 2002 as a member of a Human Research Ethics Committee and in the Harmonisation of Multicentre Ethical Review processes at a national level  
▪ PhD scientist involved in translational research in breast, gastrointestinal and gynaecological malignancies | Financial:  
▪ receives payment from St John of God HealthCare to undertake cancer research which includes managing all aspects of a human specimen biobank in concert with SJOG Pathology  
▪ NHMRC enabling grant recipient (2003)  
▪ has received support for travel and accommodation from the International Society for Biological and Environmental Repositories and the Australasian Biospecimens Network (ISBER)  
▪ contractually employed by the state government of WA through the Department of Radiation Oncology at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital to provide guidance on research and research ethics  
▪ has received travel funding from a number of pharmaceutical companies to attend Australian cancer research conferences  

Publications:  
Dr Zeps has published papers on topics relevant to human biospecimens, including biobanking and pharmacogenetics  

Guideline development:  
Dr Zeps has developed patient information sheets and consent forms for myriad groups, including the biobank of his employment  

Other:  
▪ Chair of the Biobank working group for the Global Summit of National Ethics Committees operated by the World Health Organisation  
▪ currently engaged to develop the SJOGHC research strategy at a national level  
▪ has given numerous public lectures on relevant topics  
▪ various unpaid advisory roles, including the Cancer Biology Group of the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (Chair), the International Consortium of Biobank Leaders and Co-Chair of the Science and Policy Committee of the ISBER  
▪ a non-paid member, acting in a voluntary capacity, of the Australasian Gastro-Intestinal Trials Groups Scientific Advisory Group but has received financial support from them to attend their meetings and conferences  
▪ Foundation Fellow of the Faculty of Science of the Royal Australasian College of Pathologists (RACP)  
▪ Member of the RACP Tissue banking Working Party  
▪ founding Member of the Australasian Biospecimens Network  
▪ Member of the National Research and Data Advisory Group for Cancer Australia |
A/Prof Megan Munsie
Policy and Outreach Manager &
Head of Education, Ethics, Law & Community Awareness Unit
Stem Cells Australia

- Former Senior Manager, Research & Governance, The Australian Stem Cell Centre
- Expertise in the ethical, social and regulatory issues associated with stem cells in research and in the clinic

Research funding:
Associate Professor Munsie is currently involved in several research projects or externally funded educational initiatives that involve stem cell research and/or its clinical application

Publications:
Associate Professor Munsie has published various papers, articles and book chapters on topics related to stem cell science, including induced pluripotent stem cells, embryonic stem cells, stem cell therapies & stem cell tourism

Other:
- Regularly provides advice and information to Australian researchers, academics, politicians, media, patient advocacy groups and community members on stem cell science and associated issues
  - actively promotes informed community debate about stem cell science
  - informs professional communities about stem cell science and its implications
  - contributes to the regulation of Australian stem cell research
- numerous conference presentations and public lectures (national and international) on a range of related issues
- associated with the International Society for Stem Cell Research’s Educational Strategic Plan Task Force (2011)
- Member of the Government Affairs, Ethics and Public Policy Committee of the Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research
- the Clinical and Scientific Advisory Panel to the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority
- former member of the ISSCR Task Force on the Clinical Translation of Stem Cells
- former member of the Evidence-Based Practice Collaborative for the Australia and New Zealand Spinal Cord Injury Network

Prof Margaret Otlowski
Dean & Head of School
Faculty of Law
University of Tasmania

- Member of the Australian Health Ethics Committee (person who has expertise in law) (2009 - current)
- has published extensively in the field of health law and bioethics
- has practical experience in ethics and the application of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 having served on a number of Human Research Ethics Committees.

Research funding:
Professor Otlowski is the Chief Investigator on a grant led out of University of Sydney on Tissue Banking Collections which is funded by the NHMRC

Other:
Professor Otlowski is a member of the Australasian Biospecimens Network and was on the organising committee for its 2012/13 annual conference
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<th>Prof Loane Skene</th>
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| **Professor of Law**  
**Faculty of Law & Adjunct Professor of Law**  
**Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences**  
**University of Melbourne** |

- Member of the [Australian Health Ethics Committee](#) (person with expertise relevant to the functions of the Committee) (2009 - current)
- A renowned lawyer, ethicist and academic

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<tr>
<th>Research funding:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Skene has been a past recipient of NHMRC &amp; ARC grants in relevant fields of research</td>
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<th>Publications:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Skene has published various papers on relevant topics including the ethical, legal and social issues of stem cell research and human cloning</td>
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<th>Other:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Chair, Lockhart Committee (2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member, Legislation Review Committee (Heerey Committee) (2011)</td>
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<td>Has lectured on relevant topics at various universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has given public lectures and media interviews on a range of related issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member, Australian Society for Stem Cell Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member, Ethics and Public Policy Committee of the International Society for Stem Cell Research</td>
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