



Communiqué from the NHMRC Human Genetics Advisory Committee (HGAC)

Information exchange – 2 November 2006

On 2 November 2006, the Committee met with representatives of the Investment and Financial Services Association and the Institute of Actuaries of Australia to gain an insight into human genetics issues relevant to the life insurance industry. Discussions provided an insight to existing life insurance consumer protections including actuarial and underwriting processes where relevant to human genetics.

5th Committee meeting – 3 November 2006

On 3 November 2006, the Committee discussed the strategic directions of the organisation with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NHMRC, Professor Warwick Anderson AM. Potential activities for the NHMRC in the field of human genetics were discussed within the context of the CEO's Statement of Intent, which was provided to the Minister for Health and Ageing in September 2006, and the developing NHMRC Strategic Plan for 2007-2009. Consideration was given to the highest priority ethical, legal and social issues in human genetics.

The range of activities discussed included issues surrounding the use of DNA and bio-banks, genetic registers and associated genetic material; guidelines on ethical aspects of human genetic testing, including direct to consumer DNA testing and pharmacogenomics; guidelines pursuant to s 95AA(1) of the Privacy Legislation Amendment Act 2006; and the education of health professionals and medical students in human genetics.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled to be held in Canberra in February 2007.