



HUMAN FERTILISATION AND EMBRYOLOGY AUTHORITY

SCIENTIFIC AND CLINICAL ADVANCES GROUP

Committee:	Scientific and Clinical Advances Group
Meeting Date:	16 th June 2005
Agenda Item:	11
Paper Number:	SCAG(06/05)05
Paper Title:	Horizon scanning panel development
Author:	Katy Berry (Policy manager)
For Information or Decision?	Information and comment
Resource Implications:	None
Recommendation to the Committee:	<p>Members are asked to comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion made in the paper for improving the horizon scanning panel; • The proposed agenda for the meeting in Copenhagen.

HFEA horizon scanning expert panel

1. The horizon scanning panel has been operational for one year. During this year we have sent out two questionnaires to the expert panel to support the work done by the Executive identifying new issues that may have an affect on assisted reproductive technologies. The response from members of the Panel has been good but we are conscious of the problem of sustaining the longer-term commitment of panel members in what is largely a virtual group.
2. Some members of the panel have commented to us that they feel that there is insufficient contact with other members and with the HFEA. It doesn't feel at present as if they belong to a panel. This is underlined by the fact that members seldom copy their questionnaire responses to each other and that a number of members do not manage to get to the annual meeting. Also, at present, Panel members only communicate with HFEA in response to specific questions. They do not come to us with

information spontaneously.

3. At the next annual meeting (20 June in Copenhagen) we will give members an opportunity to feed back their observations on the panel and any suggestions for change. In the meantime, we have given some thought to possible improvements:
 - **A dedicated web forum for panel members:** this would work in a similar way to a chat room but when a message is posted, an email will be sent to all members of the group with a link to the relevant page on the web forum. Members can then post their messages in response and the whole 'conversation' can be viewed. This may help to stimulate more discussion between members of the panel, so that instead of ideas being fed into HFEA, they are shared with all members of the panel and discussed.
 - **More frequent contacts:** Instead of having a questionnaire twice a year, we ask the panel about issues when they arise (no more than 1 issue a month). This would mean that we would get more immediate feed-back from the panel and they would be more involved. The risk of this strategy is that the panel members may begin to feel over-burdened. Some members have indicated that they would prefer this approach, but we would need to test this out at the annual meeting.

HHSEP meeting

4. The second meeting of the HFEA horizon scanning expert panel will take place at the ESHRE meeting in Copenhagen in June of this year. The proposed agenda for the meeting is attached (Annex A). The agenda suggests that the members discuss the success of the horizon scanning panel one year on. This will allow a reflection on how the group has been used and how members of the panel would like to see the group working in the future.
5. One of the issues identified by members of the panel is the use of artificial gametes. It has also been proposed that the group discuss this issue with Keith Campbell introducing the discussion.
6. Some time has also been allowed for discussion of any further horizon scanning issues that the horizon scanning panel members want to suggest.
7. Members are asked to comment on:
 - The suggested ways to improve the HHSEP;
 - The idea of a web forum;
 - The proposed agenda in general.

