

F-2012-00077 - The use of human embryos in research

08 May 2012

Summary of request

The Authority was asked for information about the use of human embryos in research in the UK and more specifically the number used in stem cell research during the last five years.

HFEA response

The request mentioned the HFEA 2006/7 report 'Human Embryo Research in the UK'. This was a unique report and is not part of a regular publication, however, the HFEA provides information about licensed research projects in each of its annual reports (<http://www.hfea.gov.uk/146.html>) and in September 2011 the Authority considered a review of human embryo research that should be useful. The Authority paper can be found here: <http://www.hfea.gov.uk/6622.html> and the report they considered is attached.

With regards to the number of embryos used in stem cell research, the HFEA has no statutory obligation to report data on how many embryos have been used in research projects. However, for the last two years centres have submitted annual datasheets on embryo usage from which a total can be reliably calculated. This information is contained within the two attached papers - the report considered by Authority contains 2010 data and the second document contains 2011 data.

Prior to this, data was reported through progress reports, inspection reports and licence applications. As such, the date periods overlap and totalling the number of embryos used in a particular research project or sector-wide would not be reliable. We would therefore recommend the use of the last two years data for research, as outlined above.

- [Release package 1](#) (1.3mb)
- [Release package 2](#) (99.3kb)