



8th Global Summit of National Bioethics Advisory Bodies

26 to 27 July 2010

Newsletter 3 · March 2010



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE



BIOETHICS
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
SINGAPORE

Key Information:

- Date:
26 to 27 July 2010
- Venue:
Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre

8th GSNBAB Website:
www.bioethics-singapore.org/gsnbab2010

8th GSNBAB Secretariat

Bioethics Advisory Committee

11 Biopolis Way
#10-12 Helios
Singapore 138667

Phone: +65 6773 6475
Fax: +65 6478 9956

Email: gsnbab2010@bioethics-singapore.org

Financial Assistance

National Bioethics Advisory Bodies that require financial assistance to participate in the 8th Global Summit are welcome to contact the Secretariat to explore funding possibilities.

Planning for the 8th Global Summit

The local organising committee, together with the Ethics and Health Team at the World Health Organization, is currently preparing a draft programme based on the suggestions that were received following the distribution of the previous newsletters and a questionnaire. To date, 26 people from 18 countries have either registered or indicated interest in participating in the 8th Global Summit. It is expected that this number will increase.

The topics that have been confirmed are:

1. Ethics and control of infectious diseases;
2. Organ and tissue transplantation;
3. Research ethics committees;
4. Stem cell research and therapy;
5. Nanotechnology;
6. Synthetic biology;

7. Healthcare organisation and ethics; and
8. Research involving human-animal chimeras.

Other topics that are being considered for the programme include reproductive technologies, end of life issues, and medical profiling and online medicine.

The WHO will share on its new guidance document on tuberculosis control (see below) and organ donation, as well as its updated guidelines for research ethics committees.

A mid day session will be co-sponsored by the European Commission.

If you would like to see any other topics included or if you have any suggestions or comments on the proposed topics, please send your views to the Secretariat at your earliest convenience.

Summary of the 7th Global Summit

35 countries were represented at the 7th GSNBAB, which was held in Paris, France, from 1 to 2 September 2008 and hosted by the Comité Consultatif National d'Ethique. There was active discussion on a broad range of topics, which included respect for the human body in relation to reproduction and the transplantation of organs and tissues; respect for privacy and confidentiality in relation to digital records, and genetic testing and research; personal autonomy, end of life issues, physician autonomy and patient demand; ethics committees and public policy; and ethics and cultural diversity.

Registration

All National Bioethics Advisory Bodies are invited to participate in the 8th Global Summit in Singapore. Each body may send one or two representatives. As in previous years, the host country will bear the cost of organising the Global Summit and participating organisations will be responsible for the travel and accommodation expenses of their representatives. There is no registration fee. Registration forms have been sent to all national bioethics advisory bodies. If you are interested in participating in the Summit and have not received the registration form, please contact the Secretariat at: gsnbab2010@bioethics-singapore.org. Information on accommodation is available at: www.bioethics-singapore.org/gsnbab2010/Accommodation.

WHO Tuberculosis (TB) Control Guidance Document

Following the recommendation of the WHO Task Force on Extensively Drug-Resistant-TB (XDR-TB) at their second meeting (April 2008), the Ethics and Health Team of the Department of Ethics, Equity, Trade and Human Rights and the Stop TB Department jointly established a WHO Task Force on Addressing Ethical Issues in TB Care and Control Programmes in August 2008. Twenty-two members were nominated from a variety of fields, including national TB programmes, civil society, ethics, human rights, and health law.

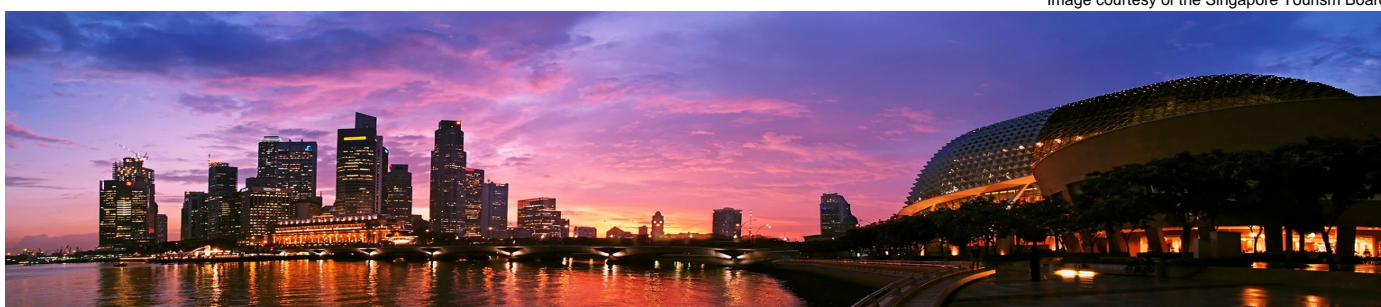
The aim was to undertake a comprehensive analysis of ethical issues in TB and to lay the groundwork for the formulation of WHO guidance in order to help governments and other stakeholders to implement TB care and control programmes in an ethical manner.

Discussion papers on the following topics were commissioned: (1) Access to diagnosis and treatment; (2) Obligations and rights of health care workers and patients; (3) Public health measures; and (4) Research.

The Task Force held its first meeting on 8 - 10 December 2008 at the Joint Center for Bioethics at the University of Toronto, a WHO Collaborating Center for Bioethics. During the meeting, members discussed the background papers prepared for the meeting and the main points to be included in the global guidance document. A second meeting of the Task Force was held on 26-28 August 2009 at WHO in Geneva. The goal was to draft an outline for the WHO guidance document. On 15 October, a consultation with additional representatives of civil society and national TB programmes took place in Geneva, in order to receive additional comments and input on the outline of the guidance document.

A refined outline of the document was then presented at the Stop TB department's Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Tuberculosis (STAG-TB) in November 2009, and received further input at the 40th Union World Conference on Lung Health in December 2009. The publication of the guidance document is expected to be in May 2010, and it will be discussed at the 8th Global Summit.

Image courtesy of the Singapore Tourism Board



More about Singapore

For those readers who may have missed our earlier newsletters we mention below a few facts of interest about Singapore.

Singapore is a small country, very close to the equator with an area of 639 square kilometres. It has an equatorial climate, which is warm (around 28 degrees Celsius) and humid all year round, so all conference venues, hotels etc, are air-conditioned, as are taxis and most public service vehicles. The country was founded in 1819, and has been an independent nation and city state since 1965. It is an international financial and trading hub and supports a number of manufacturing and service industries. Look further beneath the veneer of Singapore's commercial and industrial interests, and you will find a friendly diverse people, and a rich social fabric that is vibrant, colourful and unique in many ways. It has not lost its Asian roots and charm, reflected in its peaceable multi-cultural society. This is manifest everywhere in its hospitality, cuisine, arts, architecture, shopping resources and public life.

The 8th Global Summit will be held at the **Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre**. This is located downtown in the heart of Singapore, close to hotels, shops, civic sites, the river, major cinemas and theatres, restaurants and food outlets of all kinds, and the old city area. It is about 20 minutes drive from Changi International Airport, and is easily accessed by taxis, and by the Mass Rapid Transit System (a train system linking many parts of Singapore).

Singapore itself is easy to get to, being well served by many major airlines, including our own **Singapore Airlines**. It is also an ideal stepping off point for exploring other parts of South-East Asia, such as Bali, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Borneo, and the Philippines. Malaysia is only a bus or train ride across a causeway. Since English is the language of the education system and of government, pretty much everyone speaks it.