ACART Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, 2 July 2026
Time: 9.00 am – approx. 3.00 pm
Location: Online

Present

Professor Debra Wilson (Chair)
Dr Karaitiana Taiuru (Deputy Chair)
Catherine Ryan
Amanda Lees
Kathleen Logan
Dr Andrew Murray
Seth Fraser
Neuton Lambert
Shalomy Sathiyaraj

ECART representative: Richard Ngatai

Secretariat:
Saskia Patton
Ben Clayton
Beth Harman
Kirsten Forrest

Apologies

Dr Lynsey Cree (attending ESHRE conference)

1. Welcome and Karakia

- The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members.
- The Opening karakia was given.
- Introductions were made.

2. Opening comments

- The Committee agreed to address the pre-implantation genetic testing (PGT) consultation materials earlier in the meeting given the impending departure of several committee members and the significance of finalising the work.

3. Presentation from UC Faculty of Law students

- A group of students from UC Faculty of Law, gave a presentation about Uterine Transplants, which covered the history to date, relevant laws, donor and recipient criteria, human rights considerations and tikanga.
- The Committee asked the students questions about the presentation and provided overwhelmingly positive feedback.

4. Pre-implantation genetic testing (PGT)

Consultation readiness

The Chair updated members on discussions with the Minister regarding ACART's work programme and advised that approval was still required before the draft PGT guidelines could proceed to consultation. The committee's objective was therefore to finalise all consultation material so that consultation could commence immediately upon Ministerial approval.

Consultation stakeholders

- Members considered the proposed list of stakeholders to be consulted.
- The addition of Igenz, a private genetic testing provider involved in pre-implantation genetic testing services, was suggested.
- The Committee agreed to add Igenz to the stakeholder list, subject to contact details being obtained.

Consultation document

- Members reviewed the draft consultation document.
- No substantive amendments were proposed.
- The document was approved for consultation.

Consultation questions

Members reviewed the proposed consultation questions.

Key feedback included:

- Numbering the questions for clarity.
- Separating multi-part questions into distinct questions (for example "2a" and "2b").
- Emphasising the actual question text through formatting changes.

The committee agreed the consultation questions, subject to these drafting amendments.

Draft guidelines

Members undertook a final review of the draft guidelines.

Discussion focused on:

- Clarifying that the guidelines relate to applications made by applicants seeking approval to undertake PGT.
- Ensuring references to informed understanding and consent clearly relate to the applicant.

The committee agreed the final draft guidelines, subject to incorporation of the amendments discussed.

Consultation process

Members discussed the consultation period.

- Four to six weeks was discussed as an appropriate timeframe.
- Members noted some organisations would require sufficient time to consider submissions through internal governance processes.
- It was agreed stakeholders could seek extensions where necessary.

Members also noted that although consultation would primarily target identified stakeholders, material would be publicly available on the ACART website and other interested parties could make submissions.

Outcome

The committee:

- Agreed the consultation approach.
- Agreed the consultation stakeholder list (with the addition of Igenz).
- Agreed the consultation document and questions, subject to minor drafting changes.
- Confirmed the PGT guidelines were ready for consultation once Ministerial approval is received.

Action items:

- Secretariat to add Igenz to consultation stakeholder list and obtain contact details.
- Secretariat to make agreed formatting changes to consultation questions.
- Secretariat to finalise PGT consultation package pending Ministerial approval.

5. Apologies

- Apologies were noted and accepted.

- It was noted that some members need to leave the meeting early.

6. Approval of agenda

- The agenda was approved, noting the changed order of items.

7. Conflicts of interest

- Members were reminded to notify the secretariat of any new conflicts of interest.

8. Minutes of previous meeting

- The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

9. Chair's report

Socio-Legal Studies Association Conference

The Chair provided a report from the recent Socio-Legal Studies Association conference.

Topics of interest included:

- Legal issues relating to embryo and gamete storage limits.
- Recent United Kingdom litigation concerning expiry of storage consent and clinic obligations.
- Ethical and legal debate regarding artificial womb technologies.
- Emerging discussion concerning genetic identity and donor-conceived individuals.
- Research indicating the importance of early disclosure of donor conception/surrogacy to children.

Members discussed:

- Current practices regarding disclosure to donor-conceived children.
- Clinic experiences where donor health information later became relevant to offspring.
- The increasing impact of consumer genetic testing technologies on genetic identity and disclosure.

Ministerial meeting

The Chair reported on a recent meeting with the Minister.

The Committee was advised that:

- ACART's revised approach to human reproductive research was discussed.
- The PGT guidelines project was also discussed.

- No formal decision had yet been received; however, the Minister will write to ACART about their decision, noting that a positive response was hoped for regarding both projects.

The Committee noted the update and acknowledged the work undertaken in preparing material for the Minister.

Membership changes and acknowledgements

The Chair acknowledged the contribution of members whose terms were concluding:

- Neuton Lambert
- Dr Karaitiana Taiuru
- Catherine Ryan
- Seth Fraser
- Amanda Lees.

Members reflected on:

- The collaborative nature of ACART's work.
- The importance of tikanga Māori perspectives.
- The value of multidisciplinary discussion.
- Progress made on major projects, including PGT and human reproductive research.
- The importance of continuing to communicate complex issues in clear and accessible ways.

The committee recorded its appreciation for the significant contribution made by departing members and thanked them for their service.

10. Secretariat report

The Secretariat provided an update on the following;

- Regulatory Systems (Internal Affairs) Amendment Bill.
- New member appointments.
- Upcoming changes to the Secretariat.

11. Member report

Dr Andrew Murray reported on his recent trip to the ASPIRE conference in China.

Topics of interest included;

- The trend of denatality, resulting in aging populations.
- Policies to make having children more appealing and increasing access to assisted reproductive technologies.

- Using AI technology to assist with embryo and sperm selection.
- Microfluidics technology.
- Psychosocial care of individuals utilising assisted reproductive technology.

12. ECART monitoring

The committee received an update from the ECART representative.

ECART activity

Members noted:

- Extended storage applications continue to increase significantly.
- ECART is currently receiving very high volumes of extended storage applications.
- A subcommittee process is being used to manage straightforward applications.

Extended storage pressures

Members discussed:

- The sustainability of current extended storage processes.
- The increasing administrative burden on ECART.
- Whether the distinction between storage and future use is sufficiently clear.
- Whether current ACART guidelines unintentionally require consideration of future use issues rather than storage alone.
- Potential opportunities to simplify or streamline assessment processes.
- The possibility of reviewing extended storage guidance and application processes.

Members agreed further work was required to better understand the issue and identify potential options.

Future work

The Chair suggested establishing a small working group involving ACART, ECART and relevant policy representatives to explore potential responses and report back to the committee.

Action item: Secretariat to explore establishment of a working group on extended storage issues and future options.

13. ANZARD report

The Committee agreed that they had not had sufficient time to read this report and would discuss it at a future meeting. Noting that it would be useful to have previous years data for comparison. Future discussion should focus on what should be contained in the next report.

14. Correspondence

International Bioethics Committee (IBC) report

The Committee agreed to put this report into the reading materials for the November meeting.

Request from Repromed to ECART

The Committee noted that the original request had been misinterpreted and incorrect advice given, this has now been corrected.

Letter from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

The Secretariat advised that representatives from the Ministry will be meeting with this group and no further work is required from ACART on this.

Changes to ACART fees

The Committee noted the letter from the Minister advising that ACART had been reclassified and would be receiving an increase in daily fees.

Safety and effectiveness of ten common in-vitro fertilisation add-ons

The Committee discussed the findings of this paper, which indicated that there is limited evidence that any add-ons are effective. The Committee agreed that they would like to have more information about the use of add-ons in New Zealand, once the Secretariat have capacity.

15. Emerging technologies and the future of assisted reproduction regulation

The Committee discussed this paper and the House of Lords debate on fertility treatment regulation (4 June 2026). The Committee agreed;

- To undertake future work on PGT as part of their work item on emerging technologies.
- To begin thinking about a broader project and what to consult the public about, which will be discussed at a future meeting.

Closing

The Chair thanked members for their contributions and closed the meeting.

The closing karakia was given.