

# Policy and Regulatory Responses to: New Genomic and Reproductive Technologies

**Part I of One-day Symposium**

**9:00am – 1:00pm**

**Wednesday, 11 April 2018**

Academic Conference Room, 11/F,  
Faculty of Law, Cheng Yu Tung Tower,  
The University of Hong Kong



## Programme Rundown

Time	Events
9am – 9:15am	Registration
9:15am – 9:20am	Welcome address
9:20am – 10:10am	<p><b>Keynote Lecture : Policy and Regulatory Responses to New Genomic and Reproductive Technologies</b></p> <p><i>Over the last decade, the policy and regulatory trajectory of genomic and reproductive technologies has been a checkered one. Approaches around the world range from constitutional and criminal prohibitions, to statutory intervention, moratoria, or, professional guidance sometimes combined with regulatory oversight. Interestingly, the value-laden norms or human rights which these different approaches claim to espouse and protect are often the same. Equally challenging is the fact that both patients and the public when asked their opinion on these technologies are less conservative and protectionist. As we move towards cellular genomics and precision medicine, will ethico-legal frameworks and decisions become equally “personal” and less socio-political? Recent case law would seem to indicate more of a shared responsibility across this spectrum of approaches while also revealing the emergence of new principles.</i></p> <p>Keynote Speaker: <b>Professor Bartha Maria Knoppers, Director, Centre of Genomics and Policy, McGill University</b></p>
10:10am – 10:20am	<b>Q&amp;A Discussion on keynote lecture</b>
10:20am – 10:40am	Break

Time	Events
10:40am – 11:10am	<p><b>Lecture 2 : Genetically enhanced minors: Whose responsibility?</b></p> <p><i>Parents are legally recognized as the surrogate decision-makers for their children until they attain legal capacity (majority or maturity) to make autonomous decisions. As such, the best interests of the child are primary. With the advent of CRISPR-Ca9 and the potential to one day be able to select for or make desirable genetic modifications that favour athletic prowess, will parents subject their future children to such enhancement? Transhumanists argue that parents and society at large have a moral obligation to not only ensure a child's best interests, but also provide the child with the best life possible (i.e. improve biology and quality of life). This has been refuted as going above and beyond what is expected of parents and raises concerns increasing social inequalities. Irrespective, the State has an obligation to protect the vulnerable (parens patriae).</i></p> <p><i>While nowhere near the actual genetic enhancement of existing children, the selection of the 'best' or 'most favourable' embryos is something that is currently possible. Could this be seen as a gateway to selecting for athletic talent? In this context, a child's favourable genetic predispositions or athletic giftedness are no longer just a matter of chance (i.e. 'winning the genetic lottery') but rather a conscious decision made by one's parents. Unlike the decision to use performance enhancing drugs, which rests on the shoulders of the athlete, the responsibility of genetic enhancement in minors is not intrinsically tied to the athlete but to those concerned with keeping his/her best interests at heart. This would thus shift the whole framework upon which sport is based (i.e. the perfection of natural talents) and require a revision of the concepts of what is considered 'natural' and of the 'spirit of sport'.</i></p> <p>Speaker: <b>Miss Erika Kleiderman, Academic Associate, Centre of Genomics and Policy, McGill University</b></p>
11:10am – 11:40am	<p><b>Lecture 3: The Ethics of Enhancement</b></p> <p><i>It is helpful to differentiate between three categorically-different types of harms that might be caused by human enhancement. First, enhancement might cause harms to individuals, including physical injuries, coercion, and autonomy violations. Second, enhancement might cause societal harms, such as increased inequality, reductions in aggregate welfare, and the loss of public goods. Third, enhancement might cause harms to human values, including the values of labour, parental virtue, and solidarity. In this talk, I will identify and explore these different types of potential harms, clarifying the strengths and limits of the most common objections to human enhancement.</i></p> <p>Speaker: <b>Dr Jeff Skopek, Lecturer in Medical Law, Ethics and Policy, University of Cambridge</b></p>
11:40am – 12:10pm	<p><b>Lecture 4 : Personal Perspectives on the Future of Genomic Medicine in Hong Kong</b></p> <p><i>Genetic diseases can be defined as diseases resulting from genetic defects. They include all hereditary diseases. Using this relative loose definition, illnesses like cancers may also be included. Genetic alterations may interact with the environment and hence predispose individuals to develop a certain illness. We know that certain genetic</i></p>

	<p><i>abnormalities may increase the life time risk of cancers and technology is now available to select embryos without those bad genes before implantation. Genetic tests on blood can also be used for early cancer detection. There are concerns whether these new technology may be abused in the process of commercialization and promotions. Genetic therapies are now available for treatment of many diseases and they are extremely expensive. There is the question of who can really afford them. Only the rich would be able to access to these new treatment, unless there is a satisfactory funding model. Genetic medicine is making rapid advances in the last decades. It has helped solving many difficult medical problems, but at the same time also created many legal and ethical issues for us to consider.</i></p> <p>Speaker: <b>Professor Raymond Liang Hin Suen, Emeritus Professor, Department of Medicine, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, HKU</b></p>
12:10pm – 1:00pm	<p><b>Roundtable Discussion and Q &amp; A</b></p> <p>Panel Chair: <b>Dr Ron Zimmern, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, PHG Foundation, Cambridge</b></p>
1:00pm – 2:00pm	<p>Lunch</p> <p><i>(for participants registered for BOTH Symposiums Parts I and II)</i></p>
<p>End of Part I of symposiums</p>	