

Inter-State Alliance on Stem Cell Research -IASCR

October, 2009.

UPDATE FROM CANADA

I. National Registry of Human Embryonic Stem Cell Lines

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research's (CIHR) "*Updated Guidelines for Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Research*" (June 29, 2007) created a national registry of human embryonic stem cell lines generated in Canada (art. 6). This registry's objective is to minimize the need to generate large numbers of cell lines, with the aim of decreasing the need for donation of large numbers of embryos.

The registry has now been launched (<http://www.cihr.ca/e/39580.html>). All human embryonic stem cell lines generated using CIHR funds will be listed with the registry and made available by the researcher to other researchers, subject to reasonable cost-recovery charges. Participation in this registry will be a prerequisite for obtaining CIHR funding for human pluripotent stem cell research. However, to date, no human embryonic stem cell lines have been derived in the course of CIHR-funded projects. Investigators who derived lines prior to June 2009 in institutions that receive Agency funds are being asked if they wish to voluntarily list their cell lines. Those cell lines will be listed in the registry should investigators agree to share the information.

This registry lists the human pluripotent stem cell lines derived directly from embryos using CIHR funds. Induced human pluripotent stem cell lines will not be listed with the registry, as they are not derived from embryonic sources.

II. Canadian Stem Cell Foundation

The Canadian Stem Cell Foundation is an independent, not-for profit organization was established in 2008 “to champion the importance of stem cell science for the health of all humanity”. Its overall mandate is to unify scientists, community leaders and the public by providing education and building partnerships. Furthermore, the Foundation seeks to play a role as building Canada as a leader and innovator in stem cell science.

In September 22nd 2009, the Canadian Stem Cell Foundation released the “Stem Cell Charter” (<http://www.stemcellcharter.org/>).

The Stem Cell Charter “articulates principles for advancing responsible stem cell research and development. It aims to unify, as signatories, scientists, community leaders and the public, who believe in the therapeutic potential of stem cells and who commit to becoming informed and engaged in supporting and advancing stem cell science”. Moreover, the Charter “maintains that stem cell science has the potential to revolutionize the practice of medicine, develop treatments for diseases and create unprecedented hope for humanity”.