



# 14-day rule for Human Embryo Research Public Dialogue Oversight Group Meeting 5

## Minutes

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Date of meeting: 28 April 2026, 14.00-16.00

Location: Online via Microsoft Teams

### Attendance

**Chair:** Nick Hopwood (Professor of History of Science & Medicine, University of Cambridge)

### Oversight Group:

- Annabel Sowemimo (Community and Sexual Health Consultant, NHS)
- Barbara Czyznikowska (Community Engagement & Inclusion Manager, University of Leicester)
- Cesar Palacios-Gonzales (Senior Research Fellow in Applied Ethics, University of Oxford)
- Emma Yhnell (Reader & Associate Dean for EDI, Cardiff University)
- Jason Kasraie (Consultant Clinical Embryologist and Andrologist, NHS)
- Hana Ayoob (Independent STEM Engagement Professional)
- Marta Shahbazi (Group Leader, MRC Laboratory)
- Peter Rugg-Gunn (Group Leader and Head of Public Engagement, Babraham Institute),
- Petra Nordqvist (Professor in Sociology, University of Manchester)
- Phil Champain OBE (Independent Faith and Dialogue Consultant)
- Roger Sturmey (Professor of Reproductive Biology, Hull York Medical School)
- Rosamund Scott (Professor of Medical Law and Ethics, King's College London)

### Nuffield Council on Bioethics:

- Danielle Hamm (Director, NCOB)
- Martin Davies (Associate Director of Policy and Research, NCOB)
- Molly Gray (Public Engagement Manager, NCOB)
- Ranveig Svenning-Berg (Policy and Research Manager, NCOB)
- Sumair Nizamuddin (Policy Projects Officer)
- Tanya Bridgen (Senior Researcher, NCOB)
- Zoe Sleath (Communications Officer, NCOB)

### Ipsos:

- Michelle Mackie (Head of the Qualitative Research and Engagement Centre, Ipsos)
- Jennifer Gisborne (Research Manager, Ipsos)

**Others in attendance:**

Anna MacGillivray (Independent evaluator, URSUS Consulting), Hilary Livesey (Independent evaluator, URSUS Consulting), Sarah Devaney (Chair of the NCOB 14-day rule Working Group), Trupti Patel (Programme Lead, Sciencewise)

**Apologies:**

Laura O'Donovan (Lecturer in Law, University of Sheffield), Sharon Martin (Interim Chief Executive, Fertility Network UK)

**Minutes****Item 1: Welcome and introductions**

- The Chair welcomed Oversight Group members and attendees and ran through the agenda, including the aims of the meeting.
- The Chair thanked Oversight Group members who have supported and observed the Citizens' Summit sessions.
- The Chair noted that the minutes from the fourth Oversight Group meeting had been circulated to members by email following the meeting. As no substantive comments were received, the minutes were approved and subsequently published on the Sciencewise and NCOB websites.

**Item 2: Updates on the 14-day rule public dialogue**

- Michelle Mackie (Ipsos) presented an update on progress to date, noting that:
  - The final Community Conversations workshop has now been delivered, held in-person in Wales.
  - There is strong alignment in values and principles emerging from both the Community Conversations activities and the Citizens' Summit sessions.
  - Initial drafting of the public dialogue report is underway, including a full draft chapter prepared for review by NCOB and Sciencewise.
  - The final public dialogue report will integrate findings from both the community conversations and Citizens' Summit.

**Item 3: Proposed structure of final report**

- Michelle Mackie gave a presentation outlining the initial emerging findings from the public dialogue and an update on progress towards the final report. The Oversight Group were reminded of the objectives of the dialogue and of how the dialogue sits within a wider project, which the dialogue findings will be used to inform.
- Members asked whether there was any data indicating if participants' views changed during the dialogue and suggested that the final report include information on what, if anything, influenced shifts in participants' perspectives over the course of the process.

- Members recommended strengthening the ‘Process at a Glance’ section at the start of the report to ensure readers have a clear understanding of the methodology and overall approach before engaging with the findings.
- Members recommended restructuring the main chapters of the report to begin with a section outlining the rationale for reviewing the 14-day rule, followed by three sections aligned with the policy options discussed during the process. This would replace the current two chapters on ‘maintaining the rule’ and ‘changing the rule’ and better reflect the depth and nuance of the findings.
- Members queried how themes would be weighted in the report, and whether the intention is to capture all contributions or to prioritise and reflect the most prominent points raised.
- Members advised ensuring that views towards lowering the 14-day limit or having no limit are featured in the report.
- Members advised that, to avoid repetition and prevent the report from becoming overly long, content should be streamlined by synthesising similar points and cross-referencing sections where appropriate.
- Ipsos will review the report structure in light of the Oversight Group’s comments, and a revised structure document will be circulated to members.

#### **Item 4: Feedback from public dialogue sessions**

- Anna Macgillivray (URSUS Consulting) presented an update on the emerging evaluation findings for the dialogue and Michelle Mackie also shared reflections on the delivery of the public dialogue, including:
  - The overall methodology, with a particular emphasis on engaging under-represented voices.
  - The use of a participatory futures methodology.
  - Activities from online and in-person sessions, including facilitation and overall approach.
  - Reflections on participants’ experiences of taking part in the dialogue project.
  - A word cloud illustrating participant values identified throughout the process.

#### **Item 5: Report dissemination and impact approach**

- Molly Gray (NCOB) introduced Paper 2 which gave an outline of the NCOB plans to launch and disseminate the final public dialogue report with a view to ensuring the dialogue findings reach appropriate audiences and will support informed and accurate media coverage. Members were reminded that the dialogue report will be published at the same time as the wider NCOB project report. This included running a stakeholder launch event in the autumn on the day the report(s) is published.
- Members advised including a clear dissemination pathway for participants who took part in the process, ensuring they receive communications about how their insights

were used and the impact they had. Molly responded that a separate communications and dissemination plan is in place for participants, including a shorter, accessible summary of the full report to be shared alongside the final report.

- Members agreed that holding an independent embargoed press briefing to speak directly with journalists would be the preferred approach.
- Members strongly emphasised the importance of prioritising participant voices at the report launch event, recommending the inclusion of a diverse range of participants to reflect the breadth of perspectives captured in the dialogue.
- Members suggested broadening the audiences for dissemination of the report findings, including outreach to faith and religious groups via channels such as the Religion Media Centre, women's health media, and the scientific community. They also agreed that it would be valuable to consider publication in a scientific journal, potentially as a summary or opinion piece, to improve accessibility and enable easier citation.
- Members noted that there is likely to be significant international interest in the findings of the public dialogue and advised ensuring appropriate preparation to respond to and engage with this wider attention.
- Members advised carefully considering the approach to disseminating the findings via social media, given the sensitive nature of the topic.

#### **Item 6: OG reflections on the process**

- Oversight Group members congratulated the team on delivering a well-designed and thoughtful dialogue process and shared their high-level reflections on the public dialogue.

#### **Item 7: AOB and next steps**

- The draft report (version 2) will be shared with the Oversight Group on 12 June, with comments asked to be returned by 25 June. The final report will be delivered by Ipsos at the end of July and published in the Autumn of 2026.
- The independent evaluators (URSUS Consulting) noted that they will contact a selection of Oversight Group members over the summer to gather more in-depth feedback on the process.
- The Chair thanked members for their contributions and Molly Gray for support.