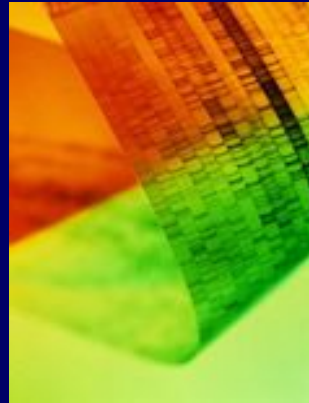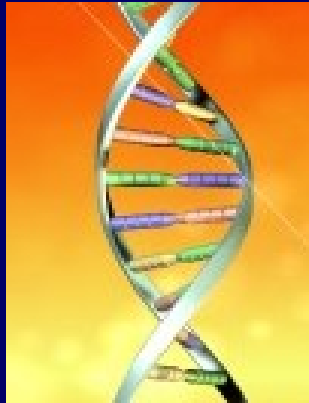# Report of the NSABB Working Group on Codes of Conduct

December 15, 2011

Roster

NSABB Voting Members:

- **Kenneth I. Berns, MD, PhD, *co-chair***

- **Christine M. Grant, JD**

- **Stuart B. Levy, MD**

- **Paul S. Keim, PhD**

- **Mark E. Nance, JD**

- **James A. Roth, DVM, PhD, DACVM**

- **John R. Lumpkin, MD, MPH**

Ex-Officio Representatives:

- **Caird E. Rexroad, Jr., PhD**

- **Jessica Petrillo, PhD**

- **Laura Kwinn, PhD**

- **Theresa Lawrence, PhD**

- **David R. Liskowsky, Ph.D.**

Charge of Working Group

- **Key NSABB Function:** *"[A]dvise on the development, utilization and promotion of codes of conduct to interdisciplinary life scientists, and relevant professional groups."*

- **Working Group Aims:** Promote the dissemination, awareness, and adoption of codes of conduct by academic institutions as well as by professional societies and individuals engaged in dual use research.

Tasks of the CCWG

The Working Group was tasked with:

1. Advising on ways to promote the adoption of codes by academic institutions and scientific societies.

2. Providing guidance on how to maintain the effectiveness of codes of conduct overtime.

The Working Group Report

- The draft report, the Code of Conduct Toolkit, and the Educational Module fulfill these tasks.

The Report: An Outline

- **Introduction** – provides an overview of all of NSABB's work on Codes of Conduct to date
- **Section I** – summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the First NSABB WG on Codes of Conduct
- **Section II** – summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the Second NSABB Working Group on Codes of Conduct
- **Appendix A –** A Code of Conduct Toolkit
- **Appendix B -** Educational Module on DURC

The Report – Main Findings

- The Introduction describes the WG main findings:

1. Codes of conduct can be effective in raising awareness about DURC.
2. The very process of formulating and developing a code of conduct is rich in opportunities for educating and raising awareness about DURC.
3. That process should be designed to engage as many stakeholders as possible.

The Report – Main Findings

4. To make a code effective, strong institutional commitment is needed. Sufficient resources need to be allocated to the development and dissemination of the code.

5. A successful code depends on a strong commitment by individuals who undertake the responsibility for "championing" and formulating the code and for disseminating it throughout the institution. Institutions should identify such individuals.

6. Sufficient time should be allocated to discussing and publicizing a code. Multiple existing venues can and should be used, for example, student orientation sessions, faculty meetings, lab meetings, RCR courses, conferences and workshops, etc.

The Report – Main Findings

7. DURC case studies should be used to develop and disseminate a code of conduct.

8. To maintain their effectiveness and relevance over time, codes should be revised and updated on an ongoing basis.

Appendix A:
A Code of Conduct Toolkit

- These findings were used to develop *A Code of Conduct Toolkit:*

  - The Toolkit: provides a set of concrete steps on determining the need for, developing, disseminating and maintaining a code of conduct.

  - Target Audiences: Individuals and groups within academic institutions, scientific associations, and professional societies.

Toolkit

The Toolkit has 5 sections:

<u>*Section 1:*</u>

Background on dual use research and on codes of conduct.

- Provides historical and conceptual background on the use of codes of conduct
- Provides historical and conceptual background on dual use research of concern

Toolkit

Section 2:

Tools for assessing the need of a code of conduct and the feasibility of effectively meeting the need for a code.

- Lays out pros and cons of Codes
- Provides considerations for assessing the need for a code and how to garner support for one
- Notes that a strong institutional commitment is needed for the Code to be successfully developed and implemented.

Toolkit

Section 3:

Tools for formulating a code: discussion guide on how to delineate obligations and responsibilities of scientists.

- Provides sample language for a code of conduct for DURC

- Provides some guidelines on who to involve in drafting the Code and on the process of reviewing the draft.

- Input on the draft Code should be sought from as many stakeholders as possible

Toolkit

Section 4:

Tools for disseminating a code of conduct, including points to consider in developing an effective dissemination plan.

- Delineates strategies for disseminating the Code
- Suggests that educational settings are ideal for discussing the Code
- Using DURC case studies would be useful when discussing the Code

Toolkit

Section 5:

Tools for evaluating a code of conduct, including strategies for measuring the effectiveness of a code.

- The Code should periodically be evaluated for its relevance, i.e. whether it captures any new developments regarding DURC

- It should also be evaluated on whether it achieves the desired outcome, namely, increased awareness of the dual use issue and responsible behavior.

- It recommends using focus groups and surveys to assess the effectiveness of the Code.

Appendix B:
Educational Module for Dual Use Research of Concern

- *Aim*: To raise awareness about dual use research of concern.

- *Target audiences*: students, PIs and others engaged in life sciences research.

- The module can be used as part of an RCR course to educate about DURC or as a useful resource for formulating and disseminating a code of conduct.

- Or, as a tool for individual, self-guided learning.

- Aligns with NSABB's strategic plan for outreach and education

Educational Module

- The Module has six parts:
  - *Part I*: Provides background on dual use research using some of the well known cases and reports (mousepox, 1918 influenza, Fink Report, NSABB establishment).
  - *Part II*: Discusses the NSABB definition of DURC, highlights the 7 categories of DURC with examples.

Educational Module

 – *Part III*: Discusses the role and responsibilities individual scientists have in the oversight of DURC.

   • Highlights the various phases of the research process in which scientists should assess DURC.

Educational Module

– ***Part IV***: Provides a framework for assessing and managing the risks of DURC.

- this section articulates the questions researchers should be addressing to assess whether their research is DURC and offers some courses of action.
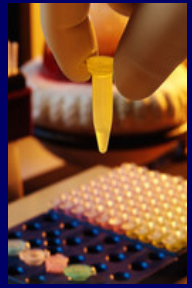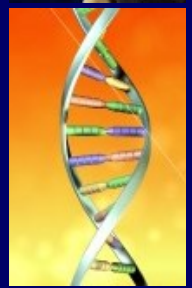
Educational Module

– ***Part V***: Offers points to consider in communicating research with dual use potential

- It uses the NSABB's communication tool as a framework for responsible communication of DURC.
- Delineates the considerations that should be included in a communication plan: content, timing and distribution.

Educational Resource

– **_Part VI_**: Provides cases and questions for discussion of dual use research of concern**.**

- 5 hypothetical cases are presented.
- The cases span the research continuum and touch on different categories of DURC.
- Each case includes questions for discussion.

Thank you!