



16 November 2016 – The research policy and development programme, as the Secretariat of the Eastern Mediterranean Research Ethics Review Committee, organized a meeting of the Committee from the 6 to 7 November to:

- follow up on the recommendations of the 2015 meeting;
- review and finalize new sections added to the Ethics Review Committee checklists (for principal investigators and reviewers);
- address new challenges to bioethics in the Region in light of results of the WHO regional bioethics survey
- discuss ethics in clinical practice and decision-making, the outcomes of the “Ethics of Health Policy and System Research” meeting held in Zurich, Switzerland, July 2015, and preparations for the first regional summit of national ethics committees (proposed to be held in Oman 2017).

The meeting was inaugurated by Dr Jaouad Mahjour, Director of Programme Management, on behalf of Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, who emphasized the support to the important work of the Committee, and wished continuous success to its role in support of ethical conduct of health research in the Region. The meeting was chaired by Professor Mohamed Saleh Ben Ammar, former Minister of Health of Tunisia.

During the meeting, the Ethics Review Committee members discussed recent developments with respect to work of the Committee, final outcomes of the WHO regional bioethics survey and ethics-related meetings held during 2015–2016, and reviewed new sections appended to the checklists.

The meeting concluded with a list of recommendations which aimed to emphasize the mandate of the committee in improving protection of the dignity, integrity, human rights and safety of WHO-funded research participants.

Such recommendations included maintaining ethical review of WHO-funded proposals, further working on updated versions of the checklists, including new sections for informed consent forms (for pregnant women, minors below 18 years of age, research during emergencies), expanding the mandate of the Committee to include bioethics in general rather than research ethics only and supporting capacity-building on bioethics and research ethics.

### **Related link**

[Summary report on the Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Research Ethics Review Committee, Cairo, Egypt, 6–7 November 2016](#)

[Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Research Ethics Review Committee, 6–7 September 2015](#)

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