



## The Australian Society for Medical Research

March 10, 2005

Research Policy Section (MDP 33),  
National Health and Medical Research Council  
GPO Box 9848  
Canberra ACT 2601  
nhmrc.research@nhmrc.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) is the peak body representing health and medical researchers. In addition to direct membership, ASMR represents the sector through 42 affiliated professional societies and Medical Colleges, representing some 15,000 people actively involved in health and medical research in Australia. In addition, corporate and disease related foundation memberships bring a further 100,000 Australians with an interest in health and medical research into association with ASMR. Our mission is to foster excellence in Australian health and medical research, and to promote community understanding and support for health and medical research in Australia. ASMR achieves these goals through public, political and scientific advocacy.

We are writing on behalf of ASMR to submit comments on the Revision of the Joint NHMRC/AVCC *Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* CONSULTATION DRAFT #1 paper (December 2004).

ASMR supports the guidelines set out in the Code on researcher and institutional responsibilities in data and records management, publication, authorship, peer-review, supervision, conflict of interest disclosures and misconduct in research.

On the matter of research misconduct (Chapter 8), ASMR suggests that the Code incorporate a statement to the effect that "Institutions must ensure that appropriate disciplinary action is taken against the person found to have been engaged in research misconduct", since as the draft currently stands, institutions are required only to report findings of misconduct to funding agencies (8.2.7) and other interested parties (8.2.8). While it is beyond the scope of the Code to define precisely what the disciplinary action should be, ASMR feels that disciplinary process in the case of research misconduct be included as a stated institutional responsibility in the code of conduct.

We hope these comments are useful.

Sincerely,

Levon Khachigian, Ph.D., D.Sc.  
Executive Directors, The Australian Society for Medical Research

Rohan Baker, Ph.D.