



4th October 2006

Dear Community Affairs Committee,

As a family, we would like to submit our opposition to the Lockhart Review Committee's recommendations, as we see them to be against the public's interest, especially against the rights and dignity of women. The recommendations, as well as being ethically unsound, present a number of disturbing practical considerations and likely effects which we as a family find particularly disturbing. The idea of women being pressured into egg donation cannot be denied and is a certain consequence if these recommendations come into being. We very much agree with the statement presented by deputy health minister John Anderson when he asked, "As cloning embryos for their stem cells depends on a sufficient supply of ova, who's going to supply the eggs? ... I venture to say it won't be ordinary, comfortably-off, middle-class Australian women who'll be doing it." The likelihood is, of course, that those in financial strains, not unheard of in our petrol and home loan focused times, will be those who will ultimately pay the price. We also point to the fact that despite all the hype surrounding embryonic stem cell research, and the financial rewards associated with it, not a single successful treatment has resulted from it. On the other hand, the use of adult stem cells has achieved remarkable success without any of the ethical problems associated with destroying embryos. Brain Cancer, Ovarian Cancer, Lymphoma, Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Multiple Sclerosis, Crohn's Disease, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Systemic Lupus, Stroke, Parkinson's Disease and Limb Gangrene, are just a few of the list of over seventy successful treatments using adult stem cells. Why don't we, as a nation, embrace this opportunity for scientific advance, and pour the time, money and resources currently being wasted on the use of embryonic stem cells into this venture, for the benefit of women and our children the future?

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Buhagiar".

Mark, Marie-Rose, Bethany and Joanna Buhagiar