

Welcome & Purpose

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the WRAIR Research Ethics and Integrity newsletter! We hope this newsletter will serve as a useful resource to you as you carry out your daily research responsibilities. Our team is here to help with your questions and concerns that you might face in your lab about research ethics, research integrity, and responsible conduct of research.

What We Do

- **Consultation**

The REI team provides confidential consultations if you are having a research-based issue and need an impartial party to help you navigate and identify solutions.

- **Education and Training**

We provide educational and training opportunities for you to learn more about research ethics and integrity. These may include webinars, in-person seminars, or external programs.

- **Policy and Procedures**

We work to identify gaps in existing policies that impact the research enterprise and then develop or revise policies or procedures to fill those gaps.

- **Research on Responsible Conduct of Research**

We conduct assessments to understand the current needs and priorities of research personnel and use the results to help inform our planning for future activities and programs.

Meet the Research Ethics and Integrity (REI) Team

Your Research Ethics and Integrity team is comprised of Dr. Liza Dawson, Dr. Jake Earl and Dr. Deidre Washington.



Dr. Liza Dawson

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Liza has been with WRAIR since 2019, and wears multiple hats. In addition to serving as the chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), she is also WRAIR's Research Integrity Officer and Chair of Bioethics. She serves as the leader of the REI team and provides strategic oversight for all activities



Dr. Jacob (Jake) Earl

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Jake has been with WRAIR since 2020, as a bioethicist. Jake assists Liza with the REI consultation service, a confidential advisory activity available to WRAIR researchers facing ethics or integrity issues in their work, and has been working on drafting and revising policies spanning a variety of topics at both WRAIR and USAMRDC. He also contributes to scholarly works on the topic of bioethics.

In his spare time, he enjoys lifting weights and telling bad jokes.



Dr. Deidre Washington

Deidre has been with WRAIR since 2022, as a research integrity specialist. She is taking a leading role in the development of the team's responsible conduct of research educational and informational programming. She helped to plan and organize the REI team's webinar on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in 2022.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading, Zumba and traveling to the Caribbean.

Every issue will feature a new scientist and their research.

WRAIR Scientist Spotlight: Meet Dr. Anjali Yadava

Anjali obtained her PhD in New Delhi, India. She received Fogarty and National Research Council (NRC) fellowships for postdoctoral training at NIH and WRAIR, respectively. Anjali became a Department of the Army (DA) Civilian in 2006 and led WRAIR's Plasmodium vivax Malaria Lab. P. vivax is the most widespread malaria species infecting humans and has a unique pattern of infection and relapse, causing significant morbidity, especially in Central and Southeast Asia. Anjali invented and developed a clinical-grade vaccine for P. vivax, which was the first vaccine for this species ever evaluated in a controlled human malaria infection (CHMI) study. She was an integral member of the team that established the P. vivax CHMI at WRAIR and also identified the host genetic factor associated with failure of the drug primaquine, used for radical cure of P. vivax infection.

More recently Anjali has been leading the Product Development Lab in the Biologics Research and Development Branch in CIDR. Anjali is focused on leveraging her expertise in vaccine and biologics development to help create novel countermeasures against military relevant infections. In addition to establishing processes for the development of vaccines, the lab has generated several proteins for evaluation as targets for the development of prophylactic/therapeutic countermeasures to combat wound infections.

Anjali also chairs the WRAIR-NMRC Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). The IBC is responsible for oversight of recombinant nucleic acid research according to the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules.

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Responsible Conduct of Research – What You Need to Know

What is “responsible conduct of research”? People can mean many different things when they use this term. The REI team likes this definition: Responsible conduct of research (RCR) is the practice of scientific investigation with integrity. It involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scientific research (NIH Guide <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-10-019.html>).

A few RCR topics are pretty self-explanatory and universal (e.g., don't lie about your research results). Many others, however, can be more subjective and open to interpretation/opinion (e.g., Did we use the right statistical test? Who should be listed as an author on this manuscript?).

In every future issue of this newsletter, we'll devote this space to providing some useful background, resources, tools, tips, etc., on a specific area of RCR. We hope that the information will be practical and useful to you in your work at WRAIR. Of course, feel free to reach out to us at any time if you need more specialized advice or assistance.



Bioethics Corner

Synthetic Embryos

What is bioethics? *Bioethics* is about norms or standards that are essential for protecting rights and interests of individuals and addressing shared societal values in the areas of medicine, scientific research, public health, social science, the environment, and related areas of concern. For more information about the multidisciplinary field of bioethics and the kinds of problems it deals with, check out this [primer from the Hastings Center](#).

The Bioethics Corner will be a regular feature of the REI Newsletter and will feature stories, news, and ideas with intriguing bioethical implications, like recent progress made by researchers at the University of Cambridge in [creating and sustaining synthetic mouse embryos](#) without the use of gametes or a uterus. This research [raises ethical, legal, and social questions](#) about potential future applications in humans: Would this kind of technology allow for the creation of human clones from stem cells? Would artificial wombs help people avoid the risks of pregnancy? Could this research help promote human health, or will it merely give wealthy people new ways to make children? Research with human embryos has been controversial, and for several decades [various legal, regulatory, and professional standards](#) have been hotly debated. Recently updated rules from the Department of Defense [severely restrict human embryo research](#), but the broader implications are still worth considering.

Important Updates

- **New: USAMRDC Policy 120, Research Integrity and Misconduct**
Establishes that every USAMRDC institutional must appoint a Research Integrity Officer, that all research personnel must report suspected research misconduct, and that all research personnel must receive training regarding the results of the policy.
- **Revised: WRAIR Policy 34 - Personnel and Family Participation in WRAIR Research Studies** Outlines requirements for WRAIR personnel and their immediate family members who would like to participate in certain WRAIR protocols.
- **Revised: WRAIR Policy 28 - Compensation and Permission for Participation of Federal Personnel in WRAIR Research Studies** Outlines requirements for compensating federal personnel when they participate in research and special permissions for active duty personnel.

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Knowledge Quiz

How much do you know about science??? Test your science knowledge with the quiz questions below, provided WRAIR researchers.

Two winners, one per question, will be randomly selected from all correct responses. Winners will get free donuts or bagels for their lab/research group/team, hand delivered by a member of the REI team! Email your answers to deidre.v.washington2.ctr@health.mil with the subject line REI Newsletter Quiz by Friday, February 24 to be eligible. For future questions, reach out to Liza or Jake. Winners and correct answers will be announced in the next issue.

Question 1

(Those who currently work in CMPN not eligible to answer this question)

During rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, most of our muscles are completely paralyzed, to prevent us from “acting out” dreams. Two exceptions are the diaphragm, so we can continue to breath, and the extra ocular muscles, which give rise to high amplitude fast eye movements. What brain stem nucleus is responsible for the generation of muscle atonia (muscle paralysis) during rapid eye movement sleep?

Question 2

(Those who currently work in CIDR not eligible to answer this question)

Historically, physicians would sometimes infect patients with one infectious organism in the (misguided) hope that it would alleviate symptoms or even cure another infectious disease. What infectious organism did physicians use to attempt to treat syphilis?

Only WRAIR Main staff eligible to receive free breakfast at this time.

News and Views

Click on each topic below to learn more.

[Nature – Unearned Authorship](#)

[Nature – The Need for Methodological Review Boards](#)

[Stat – Paying to Increase Diversity in Clinical Trials](#)

[New NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy](#)

[Science – The National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity recommends expanding oversight for certain pathogens](#)

Upcoming for 2023

- **Research Misconduct: Identifying and Reporting (March 29)**
Webinar on Research Misconduct and Integrity. This training is required for all research personnel, in accordance with MRDC policy #120. You will be able to access using Teams.
- **Animal Research Ethics (May 25)**
Hear from leading expert Dr. David DeGrazia on ethics principles to consider when conducting research with animals. This seminar will be offered in partnership with the Animal Care and Use Program (ACUP) series, scheduled for May 25. It is open to all. You will be able to attend in person, or access using Teams.

Disclaimer.

WRAIR does not endorse the information provided at any of the URLs above. They are provided for informational purposes only.