

Health**Debate on animal-human embryos**

Last Modified: 26 Apr 2007

Source: PA News

A debate on the ethics of hybrid animal-human embryos was launched on Thursday by Britain's fertility regulator.

The public consultation will be followed in September by a policy decision on whether or not to allow such research from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA).

The HFEA has already faced criticism from scientists and MPs for holding up the experiments.

It decided to seek the views of members of the public after the Government announced plans to ban the creation of animal-human hybrids.

The embryos would aid stem cell research by allowing scientists to use animal rather than human eggs, which are in short supply.

Two teams of British scientists have applied to the HFEA for permission to produce embryos that would be 99.9% human and 0.1% animal. The embryos would be cloned using eggs from rabbits and cows and genetic material from human donors.

They could provide a plentiful source of stem cells for research into the causes of disease and new medical treatments.

Last December the Government published a White Paper outlining plans to reform the law governing embryo research.

A section calling for a ban on human-animal embryo experiments triggered a barrage of criticism from both scientists and MPs.

Earlier this month a report from the parliamentary Science and Technology Select Committee said the intended ban was "unacceptable and potentially harmful to UK science". The MPs also said it was wrong of the HFEA to postpone its decision on the research applications from King's College London and the University of Newcastle.

These news feeds are provided by an independent third party and Channel 4 is not responsible or liable to you for the same.

Share this article**Related Articles in Health**

[Charity in blood pressure test plea](#)

[Glitch hits doctors' jobs website](#)

[Charity in blood pressure test plea](#)

[Glitch hits doctors' jobs website](#)

[NHS trusts under review over loans](#)