



Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri

NATIONAL BIOETHICS COMMITTEE

OPINION ON THE DRAFT PROTOCOL ON HUMAN GENETICS

(6th March 2002)

abstract

The NBC considers the “Draft Protocol on Human Genetics” (CDB-CO-GT4/RAP.8) an effective text to guide the regulations for the use of genetic testing in the sphere of health protection. The Committee reaffirms that each genetic test that is assigned and carried out in relation to a state of health (whether ongoing or of late onset), must be linked to a process of genetic counselling and assistance. Therefore, it is deemed essential that the health services should make every effort to adequately train the personnel involved to provide the most appropriate counselling and relative assistance. Furthermore, in pursuance of the precautionary principle, the NBC considers the retail sale of diagnostic kits to perform private genetic testing inadmissible.

Lastly, the NBC endorses further improvement, in future, of the protocol in question, as regards the aspects related to medical application, bearing in mind: pharmacogenetic testing; testing for verification of induced mutation of the genome and the possible harm caused by environmental pollutants; genetic therapy protocols, with possible indications for somatic therapy and, finally, genetic testing in the sphere of the insurance system and employment sector.