EDITORIAL

NEWS IN BRIEF
UNESCO guidelines on bioethics and human rights under fire 2
HIV positive man denied a student visa 2
More evidence linking marijuana to psychosis 2
Doctors call for end to ban on RU486 2
Australian state and federal governments attacked on mental health care 3
Ten out of twenty-five EU countries restrict health care for asylum seekers to emergency care only 3
Public hospital errors rise forty per cent 3
Disabled seek damages for ‘wrongful life’ 3
South Korean scandal engenders concern for stem cell projects 4

AT THE CENTRE
Ethics Officer position and Fellowship at WHO Human Genetics Programme 5
Congratulations 5
Special issue of Monash Bioethics Review, January 2006 6

ARTICLES
The practical logic of reasonableness: an ethnographic reconnaissance of a research ethics committee
Damon B Parker, Michael James and Robert J Barrett 7

Ethical considerations in research on preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission
Shyamala Nataraj 28

ABSTRACT
Preventing mother to child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) is an issue that has come to the forefront in the global response to the HIV pandemic. This is particularly true for countries in sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia, which account for the largest proportion of people living with HIV. The relative success of PMTCT efforts to date have encouraged policy makers and donors alike to push for a rapid scaling up of the program in countries with a high prevalence of HIV. However, it is increasingly apparent that the relative success of the program has been at the expense of the rights and well-being of the mothers who are the primary recipients of the intervention. This article examines the nature and scope of the ‘research enterprise’ in PMTCT and shows how it has influenced intervention design and policy in India. It will also include the voices of ‘target’ women to convey the extent to which the research has impacted on their lives. Finally, this article indicates priorities for research that can help the situation of women as well as reduce MTCT of HIV.

NOTES
CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS 40
ETHICS COMMITTEE SUPPLEMENT

JOTTINGS
Many doctors who write practice guidelines have ties to the pharmaceutical industry 42
Patients become guinea pigs in clinical trials in India 42
US alters test policy on psychiatric drugs 42
Anti-HIV microbicide shows promise 43
Jury finds for Merck in Vioxx case 43
Americans suspicious of participating in HIV preventative vaccine trials 43
Brazil advised to break patents on AIDS drugs 44
Cheerleaders recruited by drug companies to increase sales 44

ARTICLE
Medical research and involuntary mental health patients: implications of proposed changes to legislation in Victoria
_Lynn Gillam and Kathryn Weedon_ 45

REVIEW ARTICLE: Miriam Shuchman, The Drug Trial. Nancy Olivieri and the Science Scandal that Rocked the Hospital for Sick Children
_David Healy_ 50

ETHICS COMMITTEE REFLECTION
Medical research and participants with disabilities
_Colin Thomson_ 56