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Centre for Bioscience: 9 December 2009

Introducing bioethics using EVS:
the focus group and ethics committee

Mark Goodwin

Teaching bioethics using EVS

1. Bioethics: introduction and outreach
2. Ethical thinking: promoting discussion
 - asking questions
 - the ‘focus group’
 - the ‘ethics committee’
3. Electronic voting systems (EVS):
interaction and engagement

Bioethics: introduction and outreach

- Participation in large groups
- Ethical thinking
- Discussion and debate
- Topical, controversial
and emotive

Bioethics: asking questions

- Science and ethics:
 - facts
 - values
- Arguments about ethics:
 - consequences
 - principles

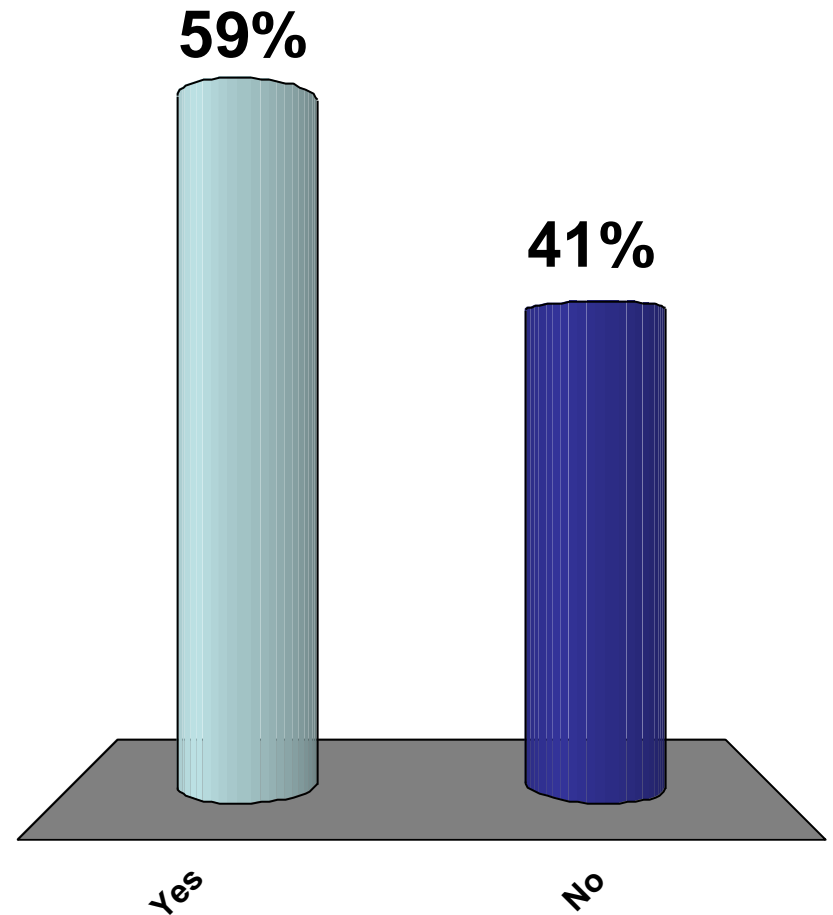
Ethical thinking: the focus group

- Exploring issues
- Discussion and structured debate
- Identifying and highlighting agreement/disagreement

- 1 Is DNA evidence reliable in obtaining convictions in criminal trials?
Yes: Lois and Geetha / No: Jason and Dini
- 2 Samples from children as young as 10 are held on the NDNAD. Is this appropriate?
Yes: Caroline and Mohammad / No: Dana and Brandon
- 3 Every person arrested for a recordable offence has their DNA stored on the National DNA Database. Should the sample and the profile remain on the database permanently?
Yes: Faye and Evan / No: Catherine and Hafeez
- 4 Should DNA samples be used for research purposes?
Yes: Kim and John / Mary and Ahmad
- 5 'Any intrusion on personal privacy is proportionate to the benefits gained' (Home Office website). Is this true?
Yes: Charlotte and Sabia / No: Adam and Harriet
- 6 Should the entire population be put onto the NDNAD?
Yes: Hannah and Tak / No: Ali and Emma

1 Is DNA evidence reliable in obtaining convictions in criminal trials?

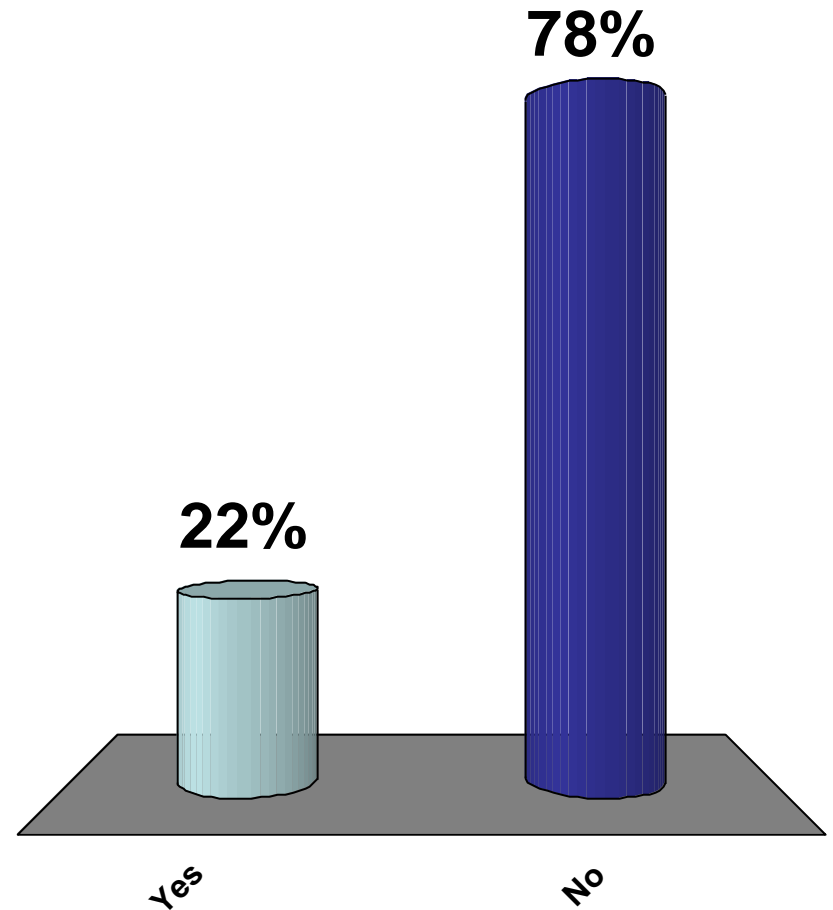
1. Yes
2. No



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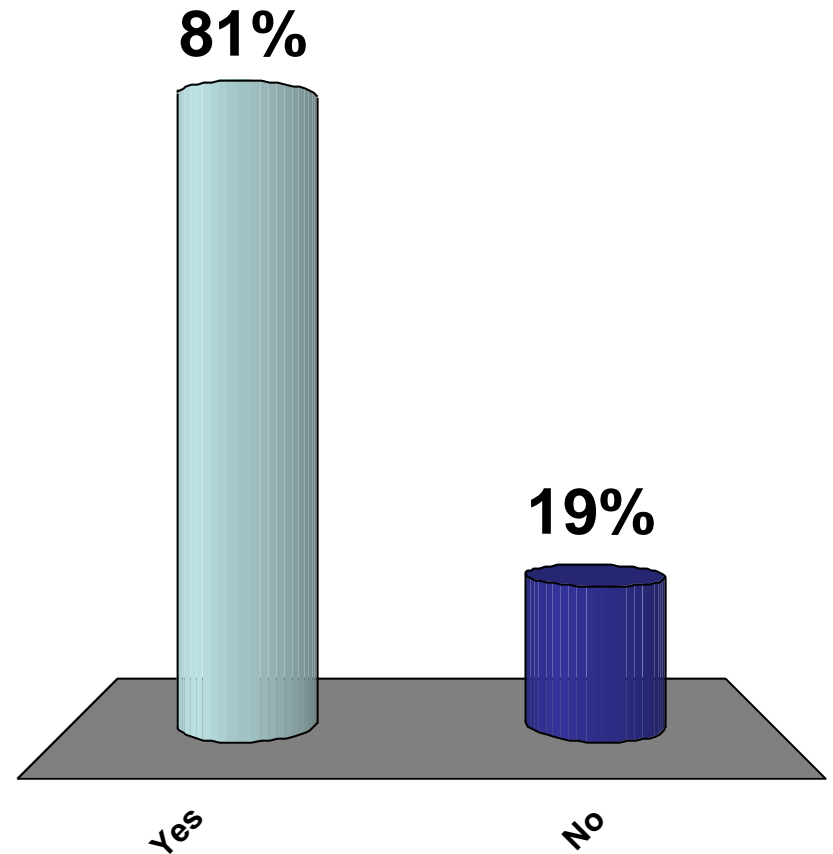
2 Samples from children as young as 10 are held on the NDNAD. Is this appropriate?

1. Yes
2. No



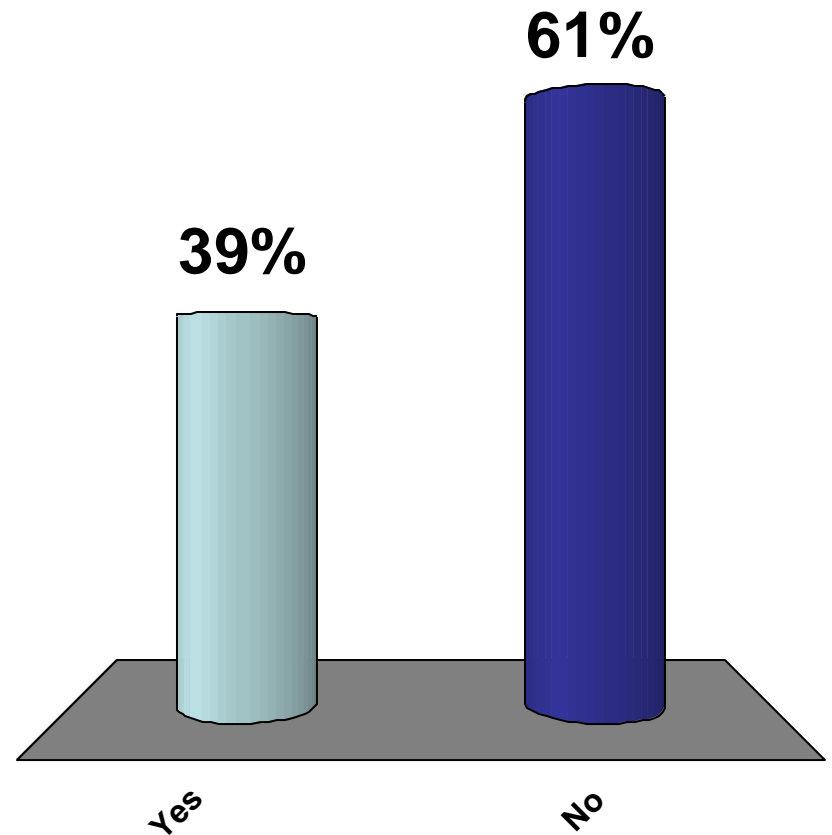
3 Should the sample and the profile remain on the database permanently?

1. Yes
2. No



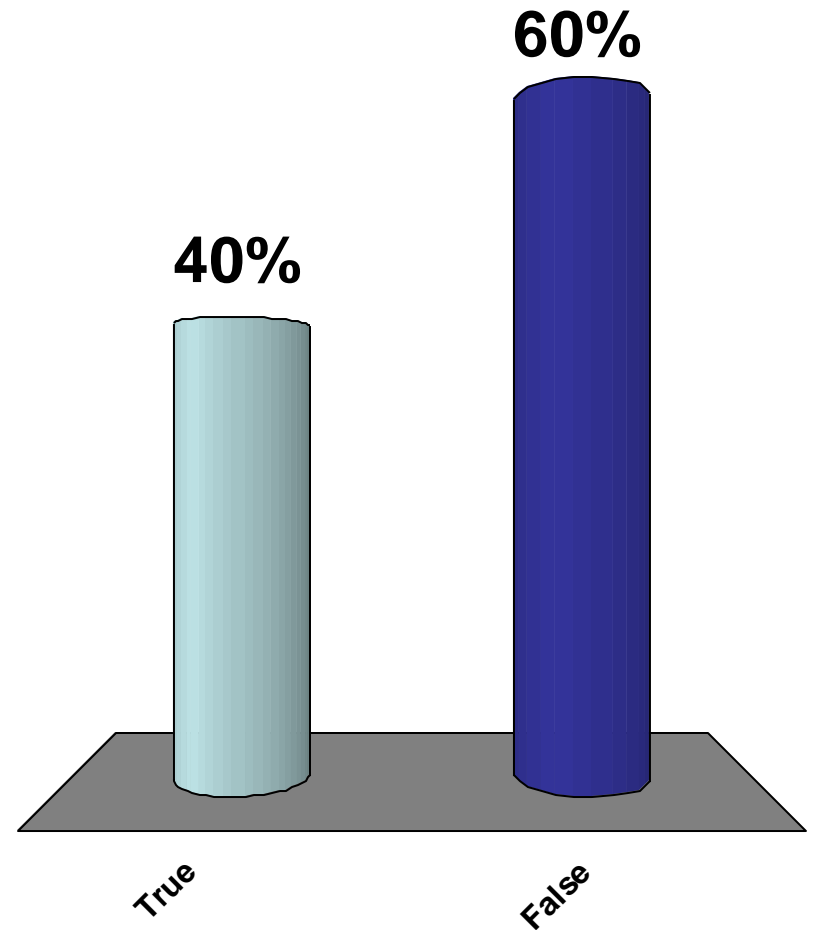
4 Should DNA samples be used for research purposes?

1. Yes
2. No



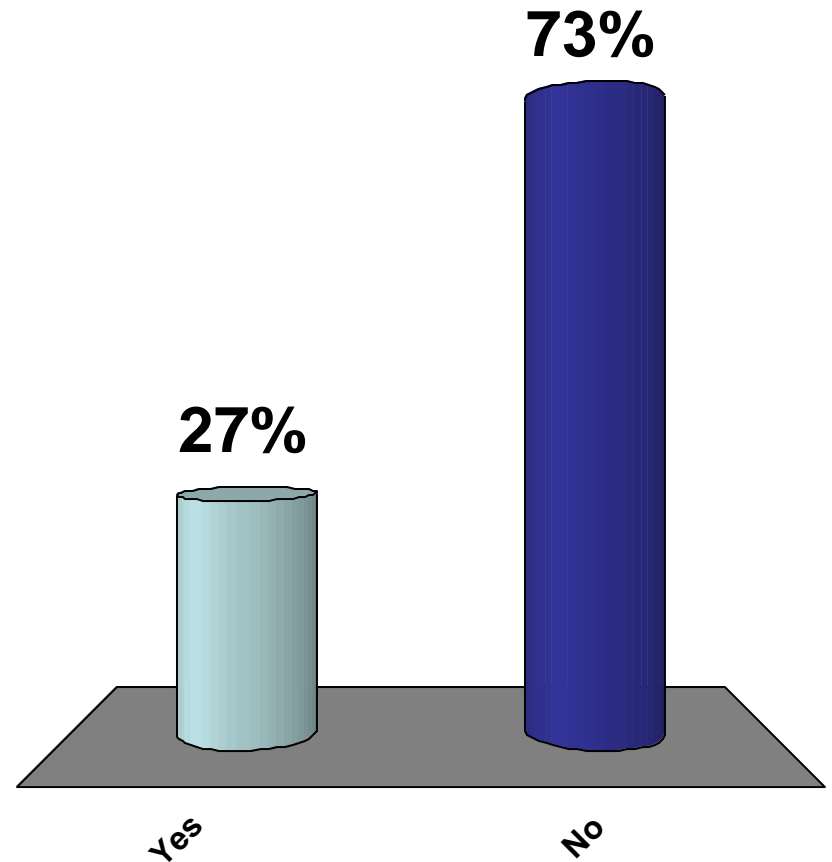
5 'Any intrusion on personal privacy is proportionate to the benefits that are gained'

1. True
2. False



6 Should the entire population be put onto the NDNAD?

1. Yes
2. No



Ethical thinking: the ethics committee

- Exploring issues
- Discussion and debate
- A search for 'convergence'

Case studies

- A. Super salmon
- B. The 'enviropig'
- C. The insulin plant

A. Super Salmon

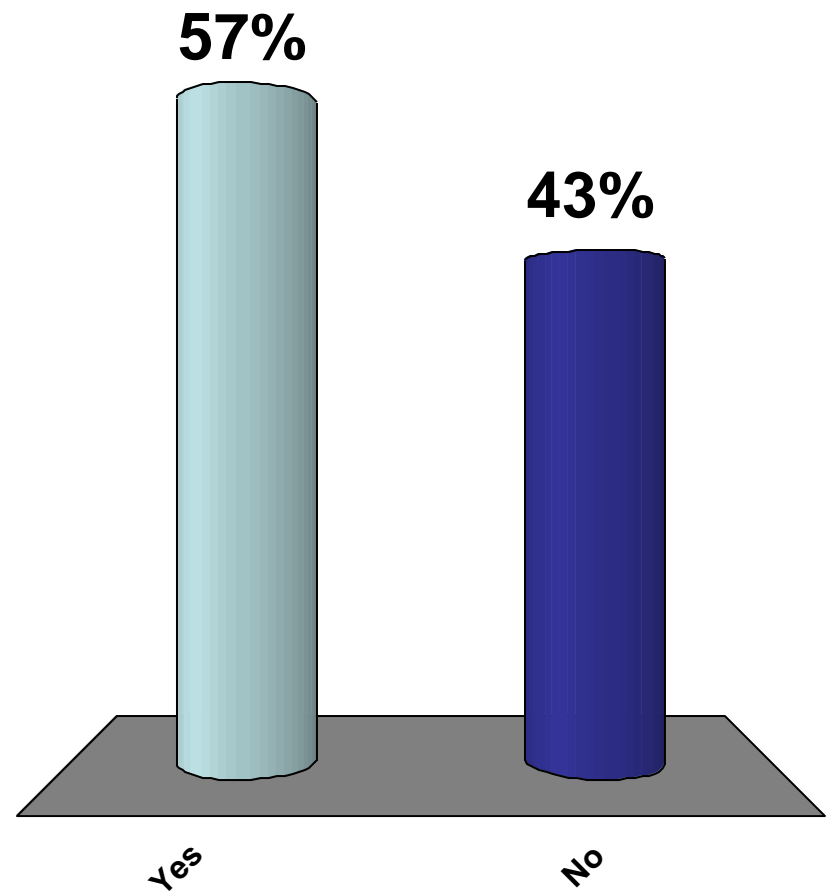
- GM fish grow to market size in half the time and convert food more efficiently.
- Two genes: growth hormone gene and promoter gene (from other species of fish).
- Stocked fish are all 'infertile females'.
- Some evidence that modified fish mature earlier, and produce more eggs, than native fish.

A. Should the 'super salmon' be licensed?

1. Yes
2. No

A. Should the 'super salmon' be licensed?

1. Yes
2. No



Results

Case study	Public vote (by EVS)		Ethics committees
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
A Oldest mother?	60	40	No No
B Boy or girl?	26	74	No No
C 'Designer babies?'	58	42	Yes No
D 'Embryo owner?'	57	43	Yes No

EVS: interaction and engagement

1. Questions: public and private
2. Questions: too many or too few?
3. Interest in response: student and teacher
4. Flexibility
5. A collective endeavour