



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF LAW

The American Stem Cell Sell: Bioethics, Law, and U.S. Businesses Selling Unproven and Unlicensed “Stem Cell” Interventions

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Thursday, January 20, 2022
12:30 -2:00 pm
Online event via zoom:
<https://bit.ly/3tkWzt2>

For more than a decade, researchers have studied “stem cell tourism” to clinics located in such countries as China, India, Mexico, Thailand, and the Ukraine. More recently, empirical studies have found hundreds of U.S.-based clinics selling unapproved and unproven stem cell interventions. Their advertising claims and clinical practices prompt troubling questions concerning patient safety, the use of misrepresentations and misinformation to sell stem cell interventions for which convincing evidence of safety and efficacy is lacking, and the capacity of federal and state regulatory bodies to enforce applicable laws and regulations. This presentation will describe the contemporary U.S. marketplace for stem cell interventions and explore ethical issues and legal concerns related to the proliferation of U.S. clinics selling purported stem cell treatments. The presentation will also summarize recent enforcement actions and consider how regulatory bodies might more effectively respond to this expanding marketplace.

Leigh Turner is the Executive Director of the University of California, Irvine’s Bioethics Program and a Professor in the Program in Public Health’s Department of Health, Society, and Behavior. He is also a member of UCI’s Stem Cell Research Center and serves as Ethics Lead for UCI’s Institute for Clinical and Translational Science. Turner’s current research addresses ethical, legal, and social issues related to stem cells and regenerative medicine products. He has also written about ethical dimensions of end-of-life care, health-related travel, and crowdfunding for medical care.

Amy Zarzeczny is an Associate Professor with Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at its University of Regina campus. Zarzeczny is the Program Director of the Master of Health Administration and Research Lead for the Health Innovation Policy group at the Centre for the Study of Science and Innovation Policy.