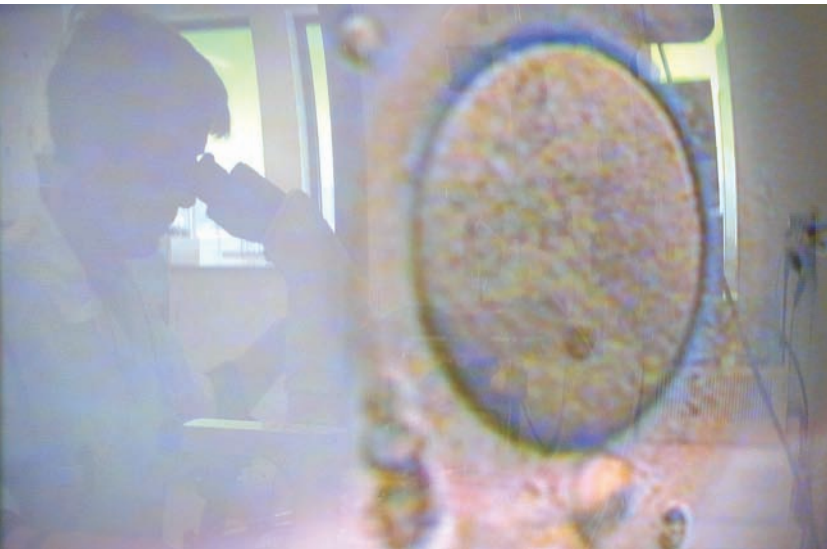


UMCG Research Code



Assuring
independent
and
accurate
medical research

Research

The University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG) is both a large academic hospital and a highly reputable center for biomedical education and research. The UMCG provides an environment in which patient care, scientific research, education and training are inextricably linked.

Research at the UMCG is carried out in close collaboration with the University of Groningen and aims at acquiring an understanding of the pathogenesis of disease and applying new insights that emerge from patient care. The combination of fundamental and clinical research focuses on four themes: chronic diseases, the human mind, quality of life and biomaterials. The mission of the UMCG is 'to build the future of health' while focusing on the basic processes of life, 'life lines' (the occurrence and progression of chronic diseases) and the consequences of aging. This work involves not only fundamental and clinical research, but also the organization of clinical care and prevention.

To assure the independence of research carried out at the UMCG, the Board of directors of the UMCG has established a Research Code. Employees of the UMCG, including those working abroad, are expected to follow the guidelines and preferred practices and to comply with the rules and regulations described in this Code.



Reputation

Scientists and the institutes in which they work have earned their reputation due to the high quality and independence of their research. But this quality and independence can no longer be taken for granted. The continuing decline in direct government funding has forced scientists to look for other sources of funding, such as charitable foundations and industry. Moreover, the funding sources, mass media and society want to have the research results publicized as soon as possible, sometimes prematurely.

These developments have increased the pressure on scientists to obtain and publish positive results, which may in turn increase the temptation to place personal gain above scientific quality. The result can be a potential loss of independence and reputation. Providing clear rules of engagement can help scientists to maintain their independence and reputation.



Principles

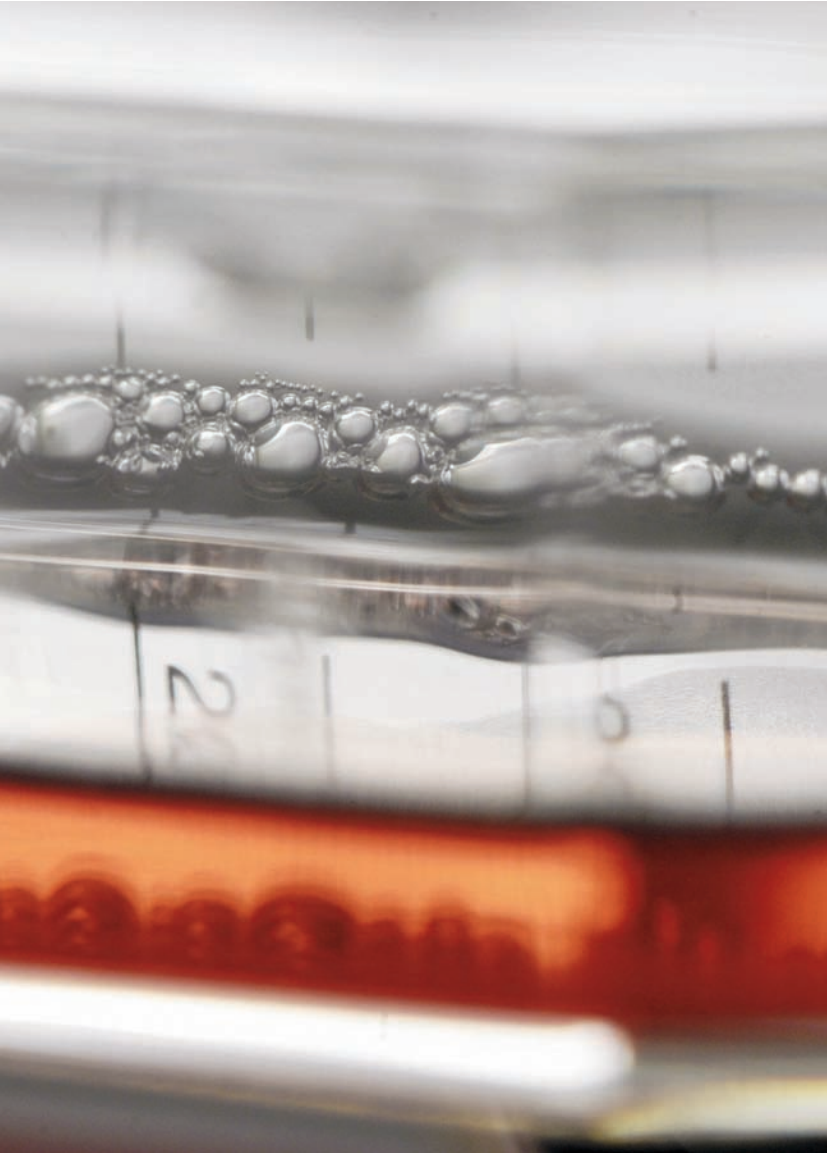
The UMCG Research Code is based on five principles established by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands: due care, reliability, verifiability, impartiality and independence. The Research Code applies to employees and others who are working at the UMCG and to employees of the UMCG who conduct research elsewhere. Moreover, the code provides insight into how contracts and relations with third parties, such as sponsors, industry and patient organizations, should be established and maintained.



Misconduct or carelessness?

The purpose of the Research Code is therefore to provide researchers and their staff with clarity about how to behave correctly, in both a scientific and ethical manner, during the process of research design, experimentation and publication. It addresses questions such as: What responsibilities do I have as a scientist? How do I proceed with biological materials and data obtained from humans or animals? What aspects are important in current and evolving contracts with industry? How do I deal with publicity and media interest?

The Research Code answers these questions and also provides concrete examples of misconduct such as plagiarism and fraud, copying the work of other scientists without reference, selectively manipulating results, adding data and using statistical methods inappropriately. Furthermore, the Research Code provides links to important science management bodies, legal codes and many other relevant codes of conduct. The most recent version of the UMCG Research Code can be found at www.rug.nl/umcg/onderzoek/researchcode



Ombudsman

Proper scientific conduct is not always black-and-white; there are also situations that appear in many shades of grey. The Ombudsman can help to clarify these potentially compromising situations. If there are allegations of scientific misconduct, the Ombudsman will carefully and independently check the facts, and if necessary, take additional steps according to a strict protocol. You can contact the Ombudsman by email: ombudsmanresearch@umcg.nl.

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