

# **Social Sciences Research Ethics Framework: Towards a National Guideline**

**Regional Consultation Meetings, 2004**

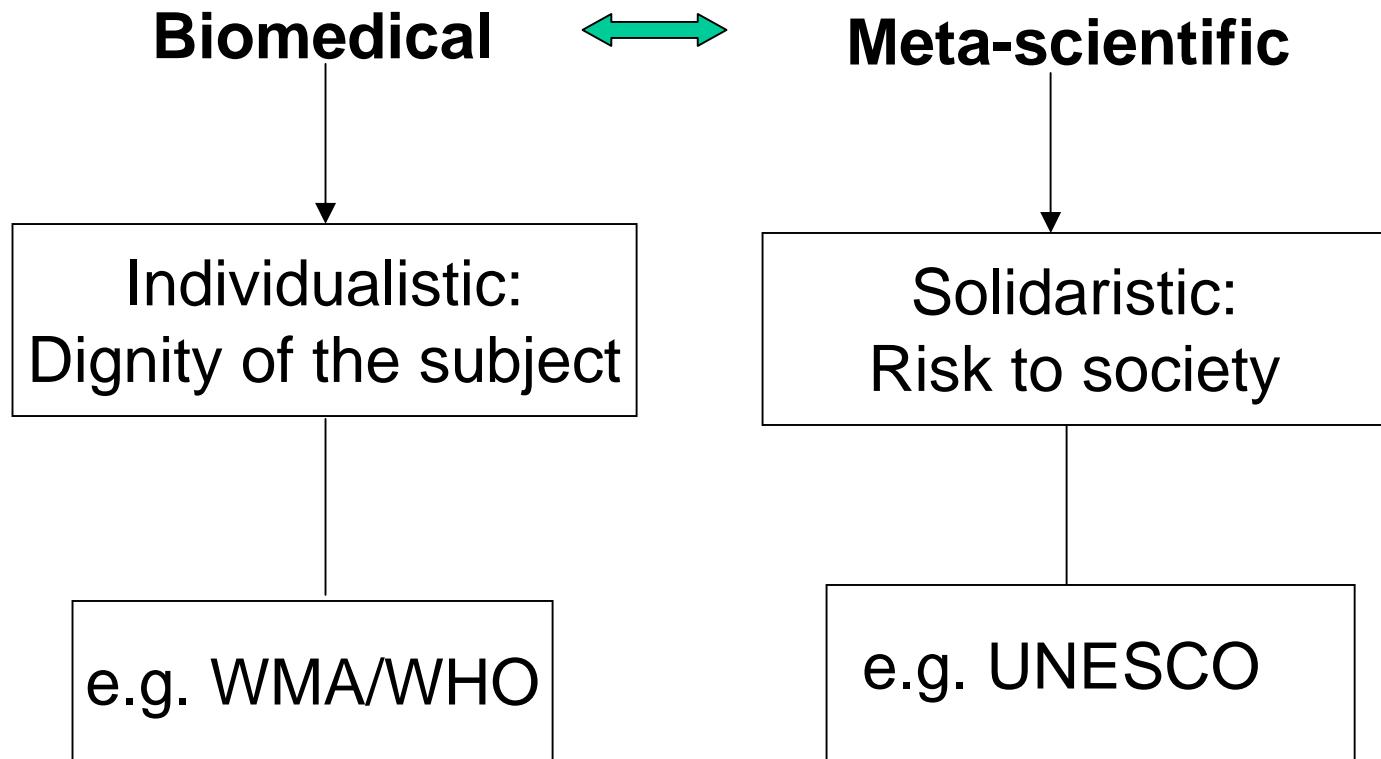
**Presentation 1: The Wider Context**



## The wider context:

1. International developments
2. National developments
3. Implications for SSR?

# 1. International Developments: Globally



## International developments: at EU/ERA level:

*Benchmarking*: move towards standardisation?

*Ethics opinions*: shaping future research agendas?



EU Directory of  
Codes of Practice  
RESPECT project



European Group  
on Ethics (EGE)



Research Ethics  
Framework

*...and Regulations*

The Clinical Trials Directive

## International research governance more significant because:

- research is increasingly international in scope – via the EC, the ESRC's own priorities, e-social science, and international databases
- despite subsidiarity, non-UK regulatory frameworks will become increasingly relevant for the conduct of trans-national research

## 2. National developments

Increased level of formalisation and monitoring of ethics and governance procedures

Litigation and risk culture

*Department of Health's Research Governance Framework*

*The Wellcome Trust report on research governance*

*Increased sensitivity to the terms of the Data Protection Act*

*Review and revision/update of professional and institutional practice/guidance (SRA, GSR, RAGnet etc)*



## Implications for SSR?

- Need to revisit, clarify and strengthen ethics review and research governance
- Do so in way that *makes sense* to domain of SSR
- Identify primary range of responsibilities for review etc
- Build new guidelines that complement other frameworks, secure their mutual recognition, and robust enough to act as custodian of good SSR in *changing* research context