



CHURCH of IRELAND GENERAL SYNOD
CHURCH in SOCIETY COMMITTEE
Medical Ethics, Science and Technology Sub-Committee

The Medical Ethics, Science and Technology Sub-Committee continued to monitor developments in legislation and innovation in industry and academia relevant to its brief.

The public debate initiated by Prime Minister Gordon Brown's suggestion that the United Kingdom should operate an "opt-out" rather than an "opt-in" system for organ donation was welcomed in a statement by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

The progress of the *Human Fertilization and Embryology Bill* through the House of Commons is being closely watched by the Sub-Committee, while the impact of new draft guidelines on the termination of pregnancy in Northern Ireland issued by the Department of Health is being monitored.

A paper on nanotechnology is being prepared to inform the Church on the factual implications of this innovation and to draw attention to some of the arising ethical issues that will proceed with the development and deployment of such technology.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES

- Continue to monitor legislation emerging from the Northern Irish Assembly, the Oireachtas and Westminster relevant to the fields of medicine, science and technology;
- Continue to monitor developments in medical, scientific and technological industry and academia;
- Work is underway to prepare a paper on nanotechnology to outline factually what innovations are involved and to draw attention to the ethical repercussions.