

Disgraced Scientist to Resume Research

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(AP) -- The disgraced South Korean scientist who falsely claimed breakthroughs in creating stem cells from cloned human embryos plans to open a new lab and resume research next month, his lawyer said Wednesday.

However, the move by Hwang Woo-suk to resume work on embryonic stem cells faces legal hurdles as he is no longer authorized to conduct such research in South Korea.

Hwang has secured enough private funding to open a laboratory in Seoul early next month, said lawyer Lee Geon-haeng.

"Dr. Hwang feels that the only way to win people's forgiveness and reclaim his honor is to resume research and show accomplishments," Lee

said in a telephone interview. "He's executing his plans very carefully in efforts not to stir any misunderstanding."

The prestigious Seoul National University, where Hwang used to work, concluded that his claims to have created the world's first stem cells from cloned human embryos were fabricated and fired him earlier this year.

Hwang has admitted to inflating some data for his research claims, published by prestigious international journals in 2004 and 2005. However, he has maintained that he has the technology to clone embryonic stem cells and was deceived by underlings.

Hwang and other researchers on his former SNU team will try to replicate the cloning of embryonic stem cells at their new lab, but are concerned whether they will be able to get human eggs for research, Lee said.

"By law, Hwang won't be able to start such research again," said Kim Young-ho, an official with South Korea's Health Ministry.

Hwang went on trial this month for allegedly accepting \$2.1 million in private donations based on the outcome of the falsified research and embezzling about \$831,000 in private and government research funds.

Hwang also is accused of buying human eggs for research, a violation of the country's bioethics law.

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