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TITLE: Stem cell tourism to China and ‘clinical labour’: global mobility and the challenges of biomedical governance through ‘neoliberalism as exception’.

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Stem cell tourism, and the associated global mobilities of people, technology and ideas, has become a site of fierce debate over ethical norms and techniques of governance. In China, supporters of commercial stem cell treatments emphasise a patient’s ‘right to try’ and respect for autonomy. Criticisms of the legal regulatory frameworks in China seem to be underpinned by traditional notions of power structures corresponding to nation states. Aihwa Ong’s (2006) ‘neoliberalism as exception’ problematises notions of power and sovereignty in Asia, and outlines how China has selectively deployed neoliberalism to aid economic development through international partnerships and investment. As an identified national priority for national technological advancement and economic development, the market for unproven SCTs has also been able to develop, and local and foreign clinicians, scientists, patients and businesspeople have assembled to take advantage of this space of ‘exception’. However, the lack of regulation also represents Ong’s ‘exceptions *to* neoliberalism’, as protections from exploitation are also removed. This presentation explores whether the removal of such protections in the context of a commercial market for stem cell treatments is a form of clinical labour (Waldby & Cooper 2008), whereby people undergoing treatments become a generative site for bioknowledge and power.