



## **Donor Program**

Donating and using donor embryos or gametes (eggs and sperm) can be a particularly emotional and complex treatment option. For this reason, Fertility Solutions carry out a thorough process so that both the donor (and partner if applicable) and the donor recipient(s) are well prepared. Fertility Solutions donor program facilitates treatment with known or clinic recruited donors with treatments being available at both clinics.

### **General Information about the Donor Program**

Fertility Solutions donor program accepts donor gametes and embryos from donors who are either happy to be known or wish to remain unknown until a child reaches the age of 18 (known as clinic recruited or anonymous donors).

If you are considering donating or wanting to access donor gametes or embryos you do not need a referral from a doctor if you want to have an initial discussion with the donor co-ordinator. Contact our clinic on 1300 FERTILITY (337 845) and ask for a free appointment with the donor nurse co-ordinator. If you are suitable under our donor program clinic policy and you still wish to become a donor or access donor then you will need a GP referral to one of our specialists where you can discuss your individual situation and options.

After this consultation if you still wish to proceed you will then need a follow up appointment with the clinic donor co-ordinator who will discuss the donor process in detail and co-ordinate the treatment plan with you.

Fertility Solutions is committed to ensuring that everyone involved makes the right decisions for themselves and their family: each person should be comfortable with those decisions in 5, 10, or 20 years. Whether you are wanting to access donor or wanting to consider donating it is mandatory that you (and your partner if applicable) attend counselling to discuss possible current and future implications associated with the donor process.

The current situation in Australia is that all donations must be altruistic, and that commercial trading in human tissue (gametes and embryos) or the use of direct or indirect inducements is prohibited by legislation. This position reflects concerns about the potential exploitation of donors and the potential risks to all parties. While direct or indirect inducements are prohibited, it is reasonable to provide reimbursement of verifiable out-of-pocket expenses directly associated with the donation. An example of this but not limited to this is; travel costs, legal costs, medical expenses or loss of earnings.

The clinic also has a policy that all donors (and partners if applicable), either known or clinic recruited or people wishing to donate (and partners if applicable), seek a legal opinion about the implications of proceeding with the donor process.

At all times during the process your information remains confidential.

## Cooling Off Period

Fertility Solutions has a cooling off period of 3 months. This period commences once the recipient(s) and donor have had an initial consultation with the clinic donor co-ordinator and a Fertility Solutions counsellor.

The cooling off period is important for both the donor and recipient(s) to consider their options and ensure this is the path they wish to follow. At your initial consultations you will be given additional information to read during this period.

Following the cooling off period if all parties still wish to proceed with treatment, the next step is to arrange a follow up appointment with the donor co-ordinator to complete and sign the relevant documents relating to your treatment.

## National Guidelines and Clinic Policy

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) have Ethical Guidelines on the use of assisted reproductive technology in clinical practice and research (Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) guidelines). These guidelines are used by professional organisations to set standards for the practice of ART.

The following information has been derived from the NHMRC Ethical Guidelines (2017) and Fertility Solutions policies and is a summary of the information that all potential donors or donor recipients should consider. Detail information will be provided to you if you decide to proceed with our Donor Program:

- The gametes used in Assisted Reproductive Services (ART) activities can either be provided by the person receiving treatment, their spouse or partner, or provided by a donor or donors.
- Gametes may be donated to a specific recipient who is known to the donor ('known donation') or to anyone who is receiving ART treatment ('unknown donation').
- If the donor specifies a recipient(s) they know personally (a known donation), clinics must respect the wishes of the donor unless the donation is prohibited by law or is contrary to the Ethical Guidelines.
- Clinics must not accept donations from any donor who wishes to place conditions on the donation that the gametes are for the use only by individuals or couples from ethnic or social groups, or not to be used by particular ethnic or social groups. This type of donation ('unknown directed donation') is considered unethical on the basis that it is discriminatory and inequitable.
- Donors wishing to direct their donations to individuals or couples from a particular ethnic or social group can only do so through "known donation". This also applies to gametes and embryos in storage that were not allocated to a specific individual or couple prior to the introduction of these guidelines.
- Clinics must meet regulatory requirements and have policies and procedures in place to minimize transmission of infectious diseases from the donor to the recipient or the person who would be born. These policies and procedures must be constantly reviewed in light of new evidence.
- There is to be a limit to the number of families created from a single donor: Clinics must take all reasonable steps to minimize the number of families created through donated gamete treatment programs. At Fertility Solutions this number is a total of 10 families of which the donor's family makes up one of these families.

Fertility Solutions policy is 10 families in total. If the donor already has a family this accounts for 1 of the 10 families that can be created.

- As referenced above, gametes from a single donor must be used to create only a limited number of families. In Australia there is currently no national registry for gamete donation nor is there a state registry in Queensland. To encourage disclosure of multiple donations at multiple clinics, potential gamete donors should be reminded of the importance of limiting the number of families created from a single donor.

## **Becoming a Donor**

One of the first steps in the donation process is for donors to have a thorough medical check-up including screening tests. Once these have been attended to and reviewed, the donor (and partner if applicable) must have counselling as stated above to ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities and potential implications of being a donor. The decision to help someone have a child is a serious one and will have lifelong implications so it is very important that donors understand the legal and psychological impact it may have both now and in the future.

To become a donor, you must meet certain criteria. Those include:

- Sperm donors must be aged between 21 and 45 years
- Egg donors must be over the age of 21 and it is preferable that they are under 37
- Not currently undergoing fertility treatment
- Preferably having proven fertility and completed their family (not mandatory)
- No evidence of coercion (for instance, from recipient to donor)
- Donation is made altruistically. In Australia, it's illegal to buy and sell human tissue. Therefore, no payments can pass between the donor and the recipient. We ensure that donors are choosing to donate for the right reasons.
- Willingness to be known to any offspring once that child reaches age 18 (sooner by agreement)
- Agreement to donate in consultation your partner if applicable
- Completing and signing a lifestyle declaration. This states that you (and partner if applicable) lead a lifestyle that reduces the chance of transmitting communicable diseases
- Full medical examination and family history evaluation
- Consultation with a clinical geneticist, either over the phone or in person
- Willingness to attend the mandatory counselling (with partner if applicable)
- Consultation with a family lawyer specialist future rights and responsibilities
- National Police Check (semen donors only)

Fertility Solutions has a limit of 10 families per donor. If you already have children in a relationship, that counts as one family.

## **Important Information about Becoming a Donor Recipient**

To begin the process of accessing donor gametes/embryos, the donor co-ordinator will go through the social, emotional and legal aspects associated with being a recipient. We will also assist you in considering the potential implications for you and your family.

Due to a high demand for clinic recruited donor sperm, eggs and embryos, Fertility Solutions Sunshine Coast and Bundaberg have a policy to provide treatment firstly for local patients and then patients outside of the Wide Bay-Burnett and Sunshine Coast regions.

If a recipient brings a known donor to the clinic, we can work with all parties to assess suitability and provide pertinent information on the donation process. Known donors will still need to undergo the same process and meet the donor criteria to become a donor.

It is important that recipients understand that they are not paying for ownership of donor sperm, or any other clinic recruited donor gametes/embryos offered to them through a Fertility Solutions clinic. The donor maintains ownership of the donor gametes/embryos until such time that the gamete/embryo is used in a treatment procedure. The recipient is therefore paying a reservation fee to reserve the sperm for their own use, at a Fertility Solutions or Monash IVF clinic as long as:

- the donor has not withdrawn consent
- the donor has not exceeded their family limit
- a medical/genetic condition has not been identified which prevents the ongoing use of the donor sperm
- storage periods for the gamete have not been exceeded

For Fertility Solutions/Monash IVF Group to be able to comply with the management of family limits:

- All exports which contain donor components must be approved by the Head of the Donor Team to ensure family limit management
- Clinic recruited gametes can only be exported to another clinic within the Fertility Solutions/Monash IVF Group and with the consent of the donor
- Recipient recruited donor gametes, embryos created with recipient recruited donor gametes and recipient recruited donated embryos can be exported to another clinic.

**A patient cannot export clinic recruited donor gametes or embryos to a clinic outside of the Fertility Solutions/Monash IVF Group.**

### **International Donor Sperm Program**

Fertility Solutions international donor sperm program facilitates access to treatment for patients requiring donor sperm. Using donor can be a particularly emotional and complex treatment option. For this reason, Fertility Solutions carry out a thorough process so that the donor recipient(s) are well prepared. Fertility Solutions donor program also facilitates treatment with known or clinic recruited donors, with treatments being available at both the Bundaberg and Buderim clinics.

Fertility Solutions work with credible international agencies to ensure that the processes and procedures followed to obtain international sperm is both ethical and compliant with Australian legislation and our clinic policies. All donors have genetic testing and are tested with an extended genetic panel carrier screen. All donors are evaluated by a counsellor accredited with the Australian and New Zealand Infertility Counsellors Association (ANZICA) to ensure that donors (and their partners if applicable), understand the full implications of being a donor, including the possibility of future contact from offspring. Additionally, donors have criminal background checks, medical health checks screening for communicable diseases. The donor's semen must also be of a suitable quality for treatment, after it has undergone the required freezing and quarantine period.

Fertility Solutions is committed to ensuring that everyone involved makes the right decisions for themselves and their family: each person should be comfortable with those decisions in 5, 10, or 20 years. Whether you are wanting to access donor or wanting to consider donating, it is mandatory that you (and your partner if applicable), attend counselling to discuss possible current and future implications associated with the donor process.

## **Donor Co-ordinator**

To assist donors and recipient(s) through the donor process we have a dedicated donor nurse co-ordinator that will spend considerable time with you (and your partner if applicable) going through the social, emotional, legal and medical processes. If you would like to have a free initial discussion with our donor co-ordinator to discuss options of becoming a donor or recipient(s), please contact our clinic on 1300 FERTILITY (337 845). All enquiries and discussions are handled confidentially.

**Donation of gametes (sperm or eggs) and embryos is a very important part of fertility treatment. There are many couples and individuals who are desperate to have a baby and the gift of donation may be the only chance they will ever have to become a parent. We thank you for considering being a donor.**