

Known Donor Oocyte (Egg) Donation

Information for Donors and Recipients

Introduction

This document provides information on the oocyte (egg) donation program offered at Westmead Fertility Centre and answers some of the questions commonly raised.

Westmead Fertility Centre only offers 'known' donation whereby the donor and recipient are known to one another. Westmead Fertility Centre does not locate a donor for a recipient or vice versa.

Legislation

To comply with legislation and governing bodies and ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals involved, Westmead Fertility Centre has a detailed and systematic egg donation program (outlined in the flowchart below). Egg donation is a complex process with various social, emotional, and medical implications. At Westmead Fertility Centre, support is available along the donation journey. Your questions are welcomed at any time, and we will endeavour to explain each step of the process.

Counselling

It is important that all parties involved (including the donor's partner, if applicable) are equally agreeable to participation in the donor program. Counselling sessions and Fertility Specialist consultations will promote openness and honesty and explore the implications for those directly involved in the donation as well as for the family unit and child(ren) born.

Time Expectations

It is important to consider when embarking on the donor program that the process takes time and there are no guarantees of donation completion or success. Both the donor and recipient(s) will need to attend Westmead Fertility Centre for various appointments and commitments. If the donor is approved and her eggs are collected, there is no guarantee that the eggs will fertilise, any resulting embryo(s) will survive the freezing and thawing process or result in a pregnancy; even if the donor has had previous pregnancies and children. It is essential to remember that the donor and recipients are individuals; therefore, treatment will vary from person to person.

Your Responsibilities as a Donor:

The recipient pays an upfront fee to facilitate this process and we require your commitment, knowing that as a donor you are also our patient and can withdraw at any time.

- The donor process can be lengthy and can take up to 6 months to complete.
- You agree that you have read and understood this Donation Information Document.
- You agree to attend the mandatory counselling at the arranged times (Tuesday or Friday only). Noting there will be a cancellation fee incurred by the recipient if you cancel at short notice.
- You agree to attend the mandatory genetic counselling appointments.
- You agree to complete the required screening if requested, even if completed previously.

**Westmead Fertility Centre Egg Donation Process Outline****RECIPIENT INITIAL FERTILITY SPECIALIST CONSULT**

Once the recipient/s have found an egg donor, they will make an appointment with a WFC Fertility Specialists. FS will outline the expectations of the Donor process and assess the recipient for their suitability to carry a pregnancy.

Upon the conclusion of the appointment the donor and recipient/s will receive an email with the necessary pathology forms. Sperm check only required if no current SFA. All requested tests to be completed prior to the next appointment.

**DONOR'S AND RECIPIENT/S FERTILITY SPECIALIST CONSULT**

Upon the completion of the pathology blood tests (sperm analysis if required) the Fertility Specialist will further explain the process and answer any questions. Providing the donor is conditionally approved, the Health questionnaire, donor information and medical history will be completed, and infectious screening blood test results reviewed and explained. FS will give preliminary approval for the donation and additional forms will be completed.

**REGISTRATION WITH WFC AND INTRODUCTION TO DONOR COORDINATOR**

Upon WFC receiving all correct information from the FS rooms the Donor and Recipient/s will be registered as WFC Patients. Donor Coordinator will be in touch to gain the 100 points of ID from the Donor. WFC Accounts will be in touch for the Donor Work Up Fee to be paid. The Donor Program cannot process until full payment has been made.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING SESSIONS**

Both the donor and recipient/s will have an individual counselling session to discuss the implications of egg donation. Partners, if applicable, must be present for these sessions.

**GENETIC COUNSELLING/TESTING**

Both the donor and recipient(s) will see WFC's affiliated genetic counsellor to discuss family history. Both the donor and recipient are encouraged to gather information about their family history prior to this appointment. The recipient(s) and donor will then undergo genetic testing. The process of genetic testing and the implications of a positive result for the recipient(s) and/or the donor and their family (if applicable) will be thoroughly discussed. The genetic counsellor will approve if the donation is able to continue.

**JOINT COUNSELLING SESSION**

Both the donor and recipient/s will have a joint counselling session prior to any consents being signed. Partners, if applicable, must be present for this session. All parties are encouraged to be open and honest and discuss and confirm their willingness and desire to partake in the donation.

**FINAL FERTILITY SPECIALIST CONSULT & NURSE INTERVIEW**

Both the donor and recipient/s will have a final medical consultation to discuss all results, sign consents and finalise preparation for treatment. A nurse interview will follow to discuss the egg collection process.

**TREATMENT**

Once all participants have confirmed their willingness to continue, all consents are finalized, and the recipient/s have paid for the donor's egg collection cycle treatment fee - the donor may commence their egg collection cycle. The donor and recipient(s) must provide a urine sample on the day of egg collection for further infectious disease screening. Successfully fertilised eggs will then be frozen. Three months following egg collection, the donor will have a final blood test to complete the quarantine period. The recipient will have a blood test for the same panel as the donor prior to receiving the embryos in a frozen embryo transfer cycle. If an infectious disease is identified, the fertilised eggs must be discarded.

Matters to be considered before donating or receiving eggs:

Before committing yourself to treatment, here are some questions for you to consider:

- What is the current status of the law regarding the donation of eggs?
- Who are the legal parents of the child?
- Are records kept of the donor and recipient?
- How do you feel knowing that the child would be able to have access to identifying information about the donor at the age of eighteen?
- Is fertilisation and pregnancy likely?
- How many times can a donor donate?
- Can you donate eggs directly to your friend or relative?
- Will you tell the child born about their biological origin? Will you tell others?
- Am I willing to undergo extensive testing that may reveal something about myself I did not know?

NSW Ministry of Health Central ART Register:

Since the introduction of the NSW Central Register in 2010, the birth of any child conceived using donor eggs must be recorded on the Central Register in addition to certain identifying information about the donor and recipient. A donor-conceived child can access their donor's identifying information from the registry once they turn 18 years of age.

100 Points of ID:

The Donor is required to bring Photo ID to their Initial Fertility Specialist Consultation. Once registered on to the Donor Program the WFC Donor Coordinator will contact the Donor for a video call to sight 100 Points of ID. Please visit [100 Points of ID](#) for more information and for what composition of documents is needed to make 100 Points.

Details lodged with the Central ART Register include:

- The full name, gender and date of birth of each child born as a result of the donation at Westmead Fertility Centre.
- The full name of the woman who gave birth to the child.
- Information about the donor, including:
 - Full name;
 - Residential address;

- Date and place of birth;
- Ethnicity and physical characteristics;
- Medical histories and any genetic test results that are relevant to the future health of the recipient and any child (and any descendants of the child);
- Sex and year of birth of other child(ren) arising from the donation;
- Name of each ART provider who has previously obtained donated eggs from the donor and the date on which the eggs were obtained.

All egg donors are asked to consent to this identifying information being placed on the Central Register. If they do not consent, donation cannot proceed.

Recipients and donors can access non-identifying information about the donor and any children (respectively) however open exchange of information between all parties is encouraged and this will be discussed further in counselling sessions.

Further Regulatory Framework:

- Legislation in NSW declares that any child conceived by donated eggs is the legal child of the couple who have both consented to the procedure of receiving donated eggs. Therefore, the partner of the egg recipient has all the rights and duties of responsibility as if the child was their natural child. The donor has no legal or financial obligations to any child(ren) born as result of the donation.
- All parties are free to modify or revoke their consent at any time up until the embryo has been created using the donated egg.
- Egg donation must be altruistic – this means that it is against the law for a recipient to give (or the egg donor to receive) any direct or indirect inducements for the donation. The reimbursement of reasonable associated out-of-pocket expenses is allowed. The counsellor will document the reason for donation to determine that the donor has not been coerced into donating her eggs.
- Westmead Fertility Centre cannot provide treatment if it is likely to result in children of the donor being born to more than five families (whether or not as a result of ART treatment).
- The donor must not be a close genetic family member of the recipient. For example, where the recipient's partner will provide the sperm to fertilise the donated eggs, the

donor must not be a close genetic relative (e.g., sister, daughter) of the recipient's partner.

- Any embryos created using the donated eggs cannot be used more than 15 years from the time the eggs were obtained.
- Before donation, donors are asked to stipulate whether they consent to the use of embryos resulting from their donation being used in the event of their death. Even where this consent has been obtained, if the embryos have been stored longer than five years, before they can be thawed it is necessary to ascertain if the donor is no longer alive and inform the recipient of this. Note – donation cannot proceed without posthumous use in place.
- Both the egg donor and recipient(s) must have at least one individual counselling session and one joint counselling session prior to the donation consents being signed. Partners, if applicable, must be present for these counselling sessions.
- The recipient(s) must alert Westmead Fertility Centre of the cycle outcome following treatment.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding the law surrounding egg donation, please seek independent legal advice.

Westmead Fertility Centre policies:

Age:

To maximise the recipient's chances of success whilst reducing the possibility of regret of the donor, an egg donor at Westmead Fertility Centre must be between **25-38 years of age**.

A recipient may receive the embryo created from the donated egg up until 50 years of age.

- It is recommended that the egg donor has completed their own family prior to donating due to the risk of reproductive tract damage and the increased possibility of regret. However, this is not prohibited providing the donor has had the opportunity to consider the issues fully and make an informed choice.
- Where the donor is over 35 years of age, there is a decreased chance of pregnancy for the recipient and an increased risk of miscarriage and fetal abnormalities in a conceived child.

Blood Test Investigations:

- An egg donor will need to undergo fertility investigation (including certain blood tests and ultrasounds) with a WFC Fertility Specialist to determine their suitability as a donor.
- To protect all parties involved, donors will be required to undergo comprehensive infectious disease screening, complete a lifestyle questionnaire and declaration, and discuss relevant medical history with their Fertility Specialist. **Outcomes of these investigations could result in the donor not being approved for donation.** The donor will need to consent to any relevant medical or personal information to be discussed with the recipient if necessary.

NOTE: If the donor tests positive for CMV and the recipient tests negative for CMV, donation cannot continue.

- If an egg donor or their current partner has travelled overseas recently, donation may have to be postponed due to Zika virus risk.
- The donor is asked not to partake in high-risk behaviours during the donation process such as being tattooed, receiving acupuncture, using needles etc. This will be discussed further in the Fertility Specialist consult.

Genetic Counselling

- To reduce the risk of any person/s born because of the donation being affected with a genetic condition (such as cystic fibrosis), the egg donor and Recipient Partner (Sperm Provider) will need to undergo genetic screening. Genetic counselling is included in the program to ensure an understanding of the reasons why genetic screening is conducted and the implications of inheritable conditions for the individual and their family. Genetic screening tests are an additional cost to the donor work-up fee and full carrier genetic screening is required.

Quarantine Period:

- To minimise the risk of disease transmission and provide greater assurance for the recipient, the embryos created using the donated eggs will be frozen for three months following egg collection. The donor will be re-screened for infectious diseases prior to the recipient receiving the embryo in a frozen embryo transfer cycle. Should an infectious disease be identified, any cryopreserved fertilised eggs / embryos must be discarded.

Previous Donation Policy:

- To maximise the recipient's chance of success and ensure compliance to legislation, Westmead Fertility Centre only allows donation of eggs collected at Westmead Fertility Centre from a donor that has not donated at another clinic.
- Any embryos created with the donor eggs cannot be donated to another couple or individual.

Storage:

- The standard initial embryo storage duration at Westmead Fertility Centre is five years. Storage beyond five years requires re-consent from the recipients and is conditional on the recipient's age. Continued storage of embryos is not available at Westmead Fertility Centre for women over 50 years of age.
- Westmead Fertility Centre may have to contact the donor, possibly many years after their egg donation cycle – so it is important that the donor informs Westmead Fertility Centre of any change in their contact details on a regular basis. Both the donor and recipient(s) should also keep Westmead Fertility Centre informed of any changes to the donor's health or the health of the child(ren) born (as a result of the donation) which may affect the involved parties.

Withdrawal of Consent:

- Recipient withdrawal of consent to use the donated oocytes will result in the oocytes being humanely discarded.
- Occasionally, couples separate. It is therefore important to understand the position of the donated material should you separate. You will complete a consent form as part of the donation process that clearly explains that in the event of your separation, no single individual in the couple has more rights to the embryos created from the donated oocytes. For clarity, should you separate as a couple any cryopreserved embryos created from the donated oocytes will be humanely discarded. This is because the donor has donated to you as a couple, not as individuals.
 - You will need a donation order in place prior to the donation in order for one individual to have more rights than the other. This must be arranged externally from Westmead Fertility Centre.

What are the costs of the program?

Work Up Fee:

Once the egg donor has been initially approved by the Fertility Specialist, the recipient(s) will be required to pay the initial donor 'work-up' fee. Please note, this fee is not covered by Medicare. This work-up fee includes:

- All counselling sessions for both the donor and recipient, including the initial genetic counselling;
- The support of a Donor Coordinator and team at Westmead Fertility Centre throughout the donation process.

Please note, the work-up fee is non-refundable if the donor is not deemed suitable to donate, withdraws their consent or does not have any eggs collected/fertilised or embryos do not survive freezing or thawing.

Costs not included in Work Up Fee:

Fertility Specialist consultations, full panel genetic screening and monthly embryo storage fees are not included in this work-up fee. Once the donor is approved as suitable, the recipient will also be required to pay for the donor's egg collection cycle and the recipient's own frozen embryo transfer cycle.

The Fertility Specialist's rooms can be contacted directly to determine the price for their consultations. Full panel genetic screening is required for both donor and recipient and is an additional charge on top the donor work up fee. This is paid directly to the Genetic Testing Lab.

Medicare Considerations:

The donor's egg collection cycle and the recipient's frozen embryo transfer may be subsidised by Medicare, if the Fertility Specialist determines the recipient has a medical cause for infertility.

Treatment Cycle Fees:

Westmead Fertility Centre offers treatment cycles using donor eggs at an affordable price. Once the work-up is complete, cycle fees for the use of the donor gametes apply however no further work up fees are applicable for that round of donation. Please refer to Westmead Fertility Centre's website for up-to-date egg donor 'work-up' fee and treatment cycle prices.

Support and counselling

The team at Westmead Fertility Centre is available to answer any questions and discuss any matters which may arise before, during and after treatment. A qualified counsellor is also available on request for support in addition to the counselling included in the donation program. There is no extra charge for this counselling service.

You may want to consider joining an external support group. Such as,

- The Australian infertility support group, ACCESS <https://access.org.au/>
- Donor Conceived Australia <https://donorconceivedaustralia.org.au/>