



Emotional and Ethical Implications Counselling

Patient Information



What is implications counselling?

You have been asked to attend an Implications Counselling appointment. This is something that HFEA requires all licenced fertility clinics to provide to any patients having treatment using donated sperm, eggs or embryos, and also to those patients who are donating their sperm, eggs or embryos so others can try for a baby. The HFEA, or Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, is the body that regulates all licenced fertility clinics in the UK.

These appointments are provided to ensure that, before consenting to treatment, you are fully informed and understand the ethical and emotional implications of what it means to be trying for a baby using donated genetic material. Likewise, if you are a donor, you also need to be aware of the implications of what it means to be donating your genes so others can have a family.

The appointment will be a structured conversation, in confidence, with one of our specialist fertility therapists. A range of topics will be covered which are intended to help you focus on and explore a variety of issues which may directly or indirectly impact you, your relationship and your family - or anyone else who may be affected by your treatment or donation, either in the present or in the future.

Why do we invite you to attend?

The decision to use donor gametes can be emotionally challenging. Implications counselling enables you (and your partner if you have one) to discuss how you feel about this and to explore the associated issues in a way that you may not have previously experienced. In couples, fear about expressing your individual feelings can sometimes lead to an uneasy agreement to undergo treatment for which you are not prepared emotionally.



**Wendy Martin -
Treatment Support Therapist**



For those of you pursuing solo motherhood, it can be helpful to review what it means for you to be having a family this way.

Likewise, we ask all donors to attend one of these appointments to ensure you are fully aware of the implications for you and any partner or children you may have or intend to have in the future.

It's not only your wellbeing that we're here to support; it is also that of your potential child. As a donor-conceived child, your child will have various rights when he or she gets older, i.e., to find out who their donor is if they wish to know.

Some of the topics that will covered

- Your attitudes towards parenting a child conceived through donation – or, if you are a donor, your feelings about donating your genetic material
- Family support and who knows of your plans either to try and conceive a child this way – or to donate your eggs or sperm so others can try for a baby
- Telling a future child of its genetic origins; and for the donor – telling their children about their donation
- How to tell your donor-conceived child about the nature of their conception, when the time is right
- Your feelings about your donor-conceived child wishing to find out about, or contact their donor when they turn 18 – and the feelings of the donor about being contacted at some point in the future
- Your views and feelings about your child wanting to find out about any other people born using the same donor as you
- The possible impact on you if your child decides to make contact with donor-conceived sibling (if these consent)
- The rights of your donor – what they can (or cannot) know about your child
- The impact of genetic ancestry testing, social media and possible changes in the law

In addition to the Implications Counselling appointment, you can see one of our counsellors as often as you need to.

How many appointments will I need?

BCRM offers one Implications Counselling session, which lasts an hour.

Two sessions may be needed, if both egg-sharing and sperms donation are involved in your treatment, or if your situation is more complicated. This will be discussed with you at the time, if needed.



Is there a charge for Implications Counselling?

The charge for Implications Counselling is £65 per session if you are a privately-funded patient. If you are NHS funded the Implications Counselling appointment will be included in your treatment package.

Ongoing Patient Support

In addition to the Implications Counselling appointment, you can see one of our counsellors as often as you need to.

BCRM offers one complementary Patient Support session for all patients prior to starting treatment. Once treatment has started, NHS patients can have one complementary Patient Support session for every treatment cycle. Self-funding patients can have up to three complementary Patient Support sessions with every treatment cycle. These can be accessed individually or with your partner.

The charge for any additional sessions of Patient Support that you may want is £65.

Using a donor is a very special way to have a family and equally, donating your genetic material so others can have a baby is also an incredible gift, but in both cases, there is a lot to consider, so please feel free to take advantage of the support that BCRM offers.



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