

Less than a third of infertile couples considering egg donation think that donors should be paid.

Submitted by: The Fertility Show

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As the HFEA votes today on whether compensation to egg donors should be raised, research carried out by the organisers of The Fertility Show shows that less than a third – just 29% - of infertile couples considering using donated eggs want donors to be paid.

The research was undertaken amongst people purchasing tickets to the Fertility Show, an event taking place in London in two weeks time which attracts thousands of infertile couples as visitors.

The HFEA's vote today is against a backdrop of great controversy with many suggesting that to increase the "compensation" paid to donors will create a financial incentive which is wrong. Currently compensation can only be paid up to a limit of £250 to cover a donor's travel and loss of earnings and the HFEA are voting on whether to increase this to £750.

There is, however, a major shortage of egg donors in the UK leading many infertile couples into what's been called 'fertility tourism', where they go abroad for treatment to countries with more generous terms for donors.

At this year's Fertility Show, amongst the exhibitors are many European and US fertility clinics with quick and easy access to egg donors. Indeed, in the US, donors can be paid tens of thousands of dollars in an unregulated market with students sometimes paying their way through college from fees received.

With 1 in 6 British couples affected by infertility and more and more couples delaying their decision to start a family until later in life (thereby increasing their risks of infertility), this is an important issue for many.

Surprising then that whilst 31% of visitors to the Fertility Show are considering egg donation – and will be attending the show to talk to overseas clinics about this – only 29% of them want the rules to be changed in the UK.

Jonathan Scott, organiser of the Fertility Show, said, "This research shows that infertile couples want donors to be motivated by altruism. Nobody wants to travel abroad for fertility treatment but the scarcity of eggs and lengthy waiting lists in the UK means that thousands of couples do so every year".

The Fertility Show is organised in association with leading patient care charity, Infertility Network UK, and takes place at London's Olympia Exhibition Centre between Nov 4-5 2011. Last year it attracted over 3,500 visitors. This is the third year the event has been staged.

Notes to editors:

- Admission price to the Fertility Show is £10 (GBP) in advance, £14 on the door. Seats in talks can be reserved online for just one pound at www.fertilityshow.co.uk.

- Amongst 60 leading speakers at the show are;

Sam Abdalla (Medical Director, Lister Fertility Centre),
Yacoub Khalaf, (Medical Director, Guy's & St Thomas' ACU),
Charles Kingsland (Clinical Director, The Hewitt Centre for Reproduction),
Julian Norman-Taylor (Consultant Gynaecologist, Chelsea and Westminster assisted conception unit),
Michael Dooley (medical director The Poundbury Clinic),
Zita West (well known midwife and fertility Counsellor),
Allan Pacey (University of Sheffield),
Dr Zhai (Zhai Chinese Medicine Clinic),
Kate Brian (Author) and over 40 other leading fertility specialists.

More information from the show's organisers;

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