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Online Submission Form for the review of the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 1988 (SA)

Contact Details

Confidential No

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Preliminary Data

What is your association to assisted reproductive treatment?: Donor concieved person.

If you belong to a company or organisation – what is the name of that organisation?:

Do you make this submission in your individual or professional capacity?: Individual capacity

If you live outside of Australia which country do you live in?: Australia

1. Please comment upon the requirement within the Act that the welfare of any child born as a consequence of assisted reproductive treatment (A.R.T.) is treated as being of paramount importance, and accepted as a fundamental principle, in respect of the operation of the Act, as well as in the provision of assisted reproductive treatment.: The 'welfare' of any

child conceived using ART should also include appropriate access to donor information, and if possible be extended to include access to previous information held by medical centres. As a donor conceived adult in my mid-thirties, I have been told none of my donor records exist from the 1980s, leaving me with no information about my biological father or half-siblings. I believe this is important information for my well being and sense of identity, and not having it has impacted my life and affected my choices whether to have children myself. Further, while I was always told about being donor conceived, and my parents loved me, it was clear that my grandparents on my father's side did not accept me as 'blood' family, and I was always treated differently by them. Any aspect of considering 'welfare' needs to take into account both the present and future (as much as possible) ideologies of society in regards to what makes a 'family'.

2. Please comment upon the replacement of the previous licensing scheme with a registration scheme for A.R.T. clinics If possible, any new systems of 'registration' should ensure that all old data/information regarding treatment from the 1970s, 80s and 90s is not lost in the updating process.

3. Please comment on the dissolution of the SA Council on Reproductive Technology and its Code of Ethical Clinical Practice.: I have had no experience (that I am aware of) with the SACRT so it is difficult to comment.

4. Please comment on the effectiveness and operation of the legislation regarding access to assisted reproductive treatment in South Australia. In particular, the conditions set out in the Act and in the regulations that relate to the circumstances in which, and to whom, A.R.T. may be provided.: I am a same-sex attracted person in a long term relationship with a woman. I was donor conceived, myself, and my partner was adopted herself. Yet if we chose, we could not access ART unless one of us was considered 'infertile'. Because of this, I know many lesbian couples who have fallen pregnant using a male friend's sperm, or sperm found through a donor on the internet. As a donor-conceived adult with no knowledge of my biological father or half-siblings, I feel this is very dangerous. This unregulated contraception practice, especially in the smaller gay community of Adelaide, will surely result in negative situations for the child, who may not know their biological relations properly. I feel there is some real potential for these children to form relationships with other donor-conceived children where their exact biological connections are not properly known. ART should

be available to same-sex attracted women.

5. Please comment on the effectiveness and operation of the Act in relation to it providing for the establishment of a donor conception register.: As a donor-conceived adult, I strongly support the release of information regarding donors and half-siblings, as has occurred in other states. I would like to know biological information about my donor such as their physical appearance and medical history, as well as more 'cultural' information such as their personal interests and beliefs, schooling, profession, talents etc. Also, it would be nice to know if they have any of their own family that I would be related to. It would be good if registers could capture this type of information.

6. Please comment on the effectiveness and operation of provisions within the Act for record keeping and confidentiality.: My experiences as record keeping are difficult to comment on, as the only records kept about my conception are reportedly 'destroyed' according to Flinders Fertility. It is difficult to know whether to believe this or not, as it is hard to conceive how medical professionals in the 1980s did not have the foresight to think about the implications of 'releasing' hundreds of children into the community who may be related to one another and did not know their biological histories. Any new methods of record keeping/confidentiality must take into account these practices of the past, to ensure that no old records are accidentally lost or overlooked when transitioning to new systems of management.

Any Other Matter:



Government of
South Australia