

Application E21/144 for Embryo donation for reproductive purposes

Michele Stanton opened the discussion for this application. The Committee considered this application in relation to the *Guidelines for family gamete donation, embryo donation, the use of donated eggs with donated sperm and clinic assisted surrogacy*, and the principles of the HART Act 2004.

Issues discussed included:

- The donor couple in this application have an embryo to donate created from their own gametes for use in their IVF treatment. The application is clear that they consider their family to be complete and wish to donate their remaining embryo to the recipient woman. Counselling reports observe that the donor couple initiated the opportunity to donate their remaining embryo to research through their fertility clinic. After discovering this was not available in New Zealand, they looked into embryo donation and have remained consistent in their views about donating over time.
- Medical reports that support the application state that embryo donation has been recommended to the recipient woman and the committee noted the recipient woman's long and challenging history of previous unsuccessful treatment. The application notes that there is an increased risk of preterm labour and pre-eclampsia and the recipient woman has had the risks of carrying a pregnancy at an advanced maternal age explained to her. The committee noted and discussed a pre pregnancy assessment letter that supports the application.
- Counselling reports for the recipient woman explore her journey towards acceptance that she will not have a genetic connection with any resulting child and notes that the recipient woman had previously had an application for embryo donation approved by ECART but unfortunately the treatment was not successful.
- The reports also canvas the recipient woman's supportive network of close family and friends. They report a strong commitment to openness with any resulting child, discussions about how this would be achieved and agree that transparency is in a child's best interests. The recipient woman has nominated a close friend for testamentary guardianship who is aware of her strong desire for openness and for any resulting children to be connected with their genetically related family.
- The donor couple also firmly believe that openness is important and have demonstrated this with their existing children. They have declared intentions to ensure that they and their existing children are accessible to any child born of the donation. They are open to, and hope for on-going contact between their own children and any resulting children in consultation with the recipient woman at a pace that feels appropriate for both parties.
- Counselling sessions have canvassed all parties feelings about termination of pregnancy, and rights around storage and ownership of the embryos, HART Act requirements and the changing or withdrawing of consent.

Decision

The Committee agreed to **approve** this application.

Action

Secretariat to draft a letter from the Chair to the clinic informing the medical director of the Committee's decision.