

Advisory Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technology

Import and Export of Gametes and Embryos

Proposed advice to the Minister of Health

Feedback Form

Please provide your contact details below.

Name:	
If this feedback is on behalf of an organisation, please name the organisation:	Catholic Women's League of Aotearoa New Zealand
Please provide a brief description of the organisation if applicable:	Catholic Women's League is a national organisation of Catholic women that gives women the opportunity to contribute to the social, intellectual and spiritual life of the Church and wider society of New Zealand. The League speaks out on issues of educational and social issues, to be a voice heard in national and international affairs.
Address/email:	
Interest in this topic (eg, user of fertility services, health professional, researcher, member of the public):	The Catholic Women's League researches nation-wide social issues, especially those affecting families, women and children, draws members' attention to these issues and canvasses their thoughts and ideas.

We will place all feedback on ACART's website, except where we are asked that feedback be withheld in full or part for reasons of confidentiality. We will remove contact information from all feedback.

☐ I **request** that my feedback be withheld in full or part from publication on ACART's website (if you wish a part to be withheld, please clearly indicate which part).

Please note that all feedback may be requested by any member of the public under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). If there is any part of your feedback that you consider should be properly withheld under the Act, please make this clear in your feedback, noting the reasons.

If information from your feedback is requested under the Act, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) will release your feedback to the person who requested it. The Ministry will remove your name and/or contact details from the feedback if you check one or both of the following boxes. Where feedback is on behalf of an organisation, the Ministry will not remove the name of the organisation.

☒ I **do not** give permission for my name to be released to persons under the Official Information Act 1982.

☒ I **do not** give permission for my contact details to be released to persons under the Official Information Act 1982.

We will acknowledge all feedback.



Questions about the proposals discussed in the paper

Question 1: Import and subsequent use of gametes and embryos

Do you agree that the principles and requirements of the Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2004 should apply in all cases where people wish to import into and use in New Zealand gametes and embryos sourced or created in other countries?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Please give reasons for your views.

We agree that the principles and requirements contained in the HART Act 2004 should continue to apply. The focus on individual autonomy and increased sense of entitlement to a child should not be used to overlook the common good of society.

Question 2: Export of gametes and embryos

Do you agree that export of gametes and embryos should be possible, provided that:

- the subsequent use of gametes or embryos is consistent with the principles and requirements of the Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2004, including any prohibitions, and
- all gamete providers, including donors, have given informed consent to the export of their gametes or of embryos created from their gametes?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Please give reasons for your views.

The export of gametes and embryos can be possible if all is consistent with the HART Act.

Question 3: Decisions about import and export for assisted reproductive procedures

Do you agree that fertility services providers should continue to make decisions about whether the import and export of gametes and embryos for assisted reproductive procedures is consistent with the principles of the Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Act 2004, and New Zealand requirements?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If you disagree with the proposal, who or what should make decisions about whether the import and export of gametes and embryos for assisted reproductive procedures is consistent with New Zealand requirements?

Please give reasons for your views.

We agree that decisions about import and export of gametes and embryos for reproductive procedures should be consistent with the principles of the HART Act and New Zealand requirements because a new human life is not to be considered as an article of commerce to be purchased at the whim of the buyer.

Question 4: Decisions about import and export for human reproductive research

Do you agree that the role of the Ethics Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technology in respect of human reproductive research should explicitly include considering and deciding applications to undertake human reproductive research involving imported and exported gametes and embryos?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you disagree with the proposal, who or what should be responsible for making decisions about research involving imported and exported gametes and embryos?

Please give reasons for your views.

Question 5: Regulations

Do you agree that regulations should be made about the requirements for the import and export of gametes and embryos?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If you disagree with the proposal, how should requirements for import and export be set out?

Please give reasons for your views.

Without doubt there should be regulations about requirements for the import and export of gametes and embryos. Generally rules and regulations mean that everyone starts off on the same footing. We are after all talking about the possibility of new life, a human baby being the objective, and as such it is important that there is consistency of practice.

Question 6: Donor compensation

Do you agree that the Ministry of Health should be asked to consider guidance to fertility services providers that allows for increased levels of donor compensation, particularly for egg donors?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you agree that such guidance should, for consistency, include the expenses available to surrogates?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you agree with the proposals, do you have a view about appropriate maximum levels of compensation to donors?

Please give reasons for your views.

There is a fine line between recompense and commercialisation. We are not for commercialisation. The amount that is paid should not be conceived in any way as a form of incentive for those who are donating their gametes or acting as surrogates.

Question 7: Public health information

Do you agree that the Ministry of Health should be asked to consider public health information about:

- the impact of age and other factors on fertility, and
- gamete donation?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Please give reasons for your views.

In a discussion with young people we became aware that the focus for them seems to be on birth control, avoiding infection, or if unavoidable an abortion – fertility is a presumed notion.

Many of them believed that it is usual to become pregnant in one's 40s because of high profile pregnancies of aging celebrities, never thinking that these celebrities have had to rely on expensive, invasive and stressful procedures.

There is a distinct lack of the realisation that a women's fertility in particular, starts to decline in the early 30s. There is the presumption too, that assisted reproduction usually results in a baby being born, which sadly for many is not so.

There was some awareness that life style and health has a bearing on fertility, that alcohol and other drugs, obesity and even abortion can preclude child bearing.

Question 8: Data about offshore fertility treatment and outcomes

Do you agree that the Ministry of Health should be asked to consider strategies for collecting data about the use and outcomes of offshore fertility treatment by New Zealanders?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you agree, do you have ideas about how such information could be collected?

Please give reasons for your views.

Question 9: Comments or suggestions

Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the issues discussed in this proposed advice paper?