



# Prospective Donor Information

**Thank you!** You are taking the first step towards helping others fulfil their dreams of becoming parents.

BCRM is an internationally recognised fertility clinic offering assisted reproductive treatment and is licensed by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). Our Sperm Donors are greatly appreciated by both BCRM and those on the path to parenthood. Potential donors are welcome from all walks of life, backgrounds and ethnicities and could be those who are already fathers, know friends or family that have struggled with fertility issues or they just have a desire to help others.

This document helps answer most of the commonly asked questions. If you would still like to proceed with your application after reading these, please contact us so we can send you our medical assessment questionnaire.

Thanks again for your interest in becoming a sperm donor, we hope to hear from you soon!

## Why are sperm donors needed?

A common misconception is that pregnancy is always easy to achieve and many people are unaware of infertility until they or someone close to them, are unable to have children. One in seven couples struggle to achieve a pregnancy and around half of these are due to problems with sperm. Whilst most of these issues can be overcome using assisted reproductive techniques, a proportion of men will have no sperm and require a sperm donor. Single women and same sex couples will also require sperm donors to conceive.

## Who can donate?

If you're a healthy man aged between 18 and 45 and are interested in becoming a sperm donor, our experienced staff will be happy to talk you through the process in more detail. Prior to donation, all potential donors must be assessed by the BCRM Sperm Donation Team to determine their suitability to donate and be screened for a range of medical conditions. The basic screening requirements are set by the HFEA and professional guidelines. Screening aims to prevent the transmission of any infectious or inherited diseases from donor to recipient or any child born as a result of donation.



## What is the law?

Donor banks in the UK must be licensed by the HFEA. As part of this, some of your personal information must be kept by us and reported to the HFEA. We will also ask you to provide some additional information which we tell potential recipients about such as your interests, character etc. You can also leave a goodwill message for any children born as a result of your donations, which are often greatly valued.

On 1st April 2005, the law in the UK changed meaning that donors could no longer donate anonymously. As a result, from the age of 18, any children conceived using your donated sperm have the right to access identifying information about you, including details of your address provided during the donation process. This means that donor conceived children may try to make contact with you in the future. However, not all donor offspring will want to access this information or indeed, make contact. In addition, whilst we encourage transparency, not all parents will disclose to their children that they were donor conceived.

It's important to understand that donors have no legal or financial responsibilities to any child created from their donation; only the person who received the donation (and their partner if they have one) will be the child's legal and social parent(s). The donor will not be named on the birth certificate and will have no rights over how the child is raised.

The recipients of donor sperm (i.e. fertility patients) do not have access to identifying information.

## How do I become a donor?

Contact us to request a copy of our medical assessment questionnaire. Once completed, you can return it to us by email. This will be reviewed by one of our clinicians to assess your suitability to become a sperm donor.. The information you provide will be checked against national donor recruitment guidelines. If we are unable to proceed with your application based on your responses, you will be given a full explanation. If we are able to proceed we will book you an appointment to provide a sperm sample for analysis.

We understand that this may be the most daunting part of the process but in our experience, most men find it's not as bad as they thought! You must refrain from ejaculation for 2-3 days prior to the semen analysis; too short or too long an abstinence may have an impact on the results. Prior to having a semen analysis, we would urge you to consider the implications of any findings for you or your partner. It is possible the test may uncover potential issues such as a low sperm count, or in some cases, no sperm at all. We will have the results of your semen analysis within 2-3 working days and will email you with an explanation. If we are unable to accept you as a sperm donor based on your semen analysis, we will explain the reasons why. If the results meet the acceptability criteria, you will be invited to proceed to the next stage of the programme. This will be a telephone consultation with a member of the team to ensure you fully understand the legal and ethical implications of becoming a sperm donor and give you a chance to ask



any questions you may have. If you are happy to proceed with your application after this appointment the next stage of enrolment requires you to be screened for genetic diseases and sexually transmitted infections. This will involve a blood test and urine sample. Not many people enjoy having a blood test but we'll try to make it as quick as possible! You will also be required to have a session with one of our counsellors. Finally, there's some legal paperwork to complete and an appointment with one of our specialist doctors for a physical examination and to give you the final go-ahead!

## How long does it take?

Once you have been accepted onto the programme, we will require on average 25-30 visits over a 6-12 month period. You will be required to donate ideally once a week but this can be discussed with you to ensure a mutually convenient schedule. (Please note that donations need to take place during normal operational hours Mon-Fri 8.30am-1.30pm). We will require further blood and urine samples every 3 months whilst you are donating and a final screen 3 months after your last donation of sperm. This screening is crucial, as it excludes the presence of active infections and allows us to release your samples from quarantine to be used by potential recipients.

## Can I change my mind?

All sperm donors must, by law, consent in writing that their sperm can be used for treatment. Donors can change or withdraw consent up to the point at which any sperm (or any embryos created from the donated sperm) are transferred to the recipient.

This means that you can change or withdraw your consent to any stored frozen sperm, or embryos created from them, being used after donation.

We recognise that circumstances change which is why we ensure you are fully informed and have the chance to ask questions before embarking on our sperm donation programme. It's important to remember that withdrawing consent to the use of your samples may have distressing consequences for potential recipients so we encourage you to be open and honest throughout the process if you are having any doubts about continuing.

## Compensation

Once accepted onto the donor programme, donors can be reimbursed a fee of up to £45 per visit to the clinic. This is to cover any out-of-pocket expenses you may have incurred visiting the clinic. You will not need to provide receipts to receive this sum.

Please visit [www.hfea.gov.uk/donation](http://www.hfea.gov.uk/donation) for more information.

**Want to proceed? Please complete the questionnaire and return it to [SpermDonors@bcrm.clinic](mailto:SpermDonors@bcrm.clinic)**