

HFEA Strategy

2014-17



Introduction

The HFEA is the regulator of fertility treatment and human embryo research in the UK. Our role includes setting standards for clinics, licensing them, and providing a range of information for the public, particularly people seeking treatment, donor-conceived people and donors. This document sets out our strategy for the next three years.

Our vision

High quality care for everyone affected by assisted reproduction

When we say...

We mean...



High quality care

- Safe, ethical and effective care and treatment
- Support for patients, donors and donor-conceived people
- Excellent service and information from the HFEA



Everyone affected

- Patients and parents
- All those conceived through assisted reproduction
- Donor-conceived people
- Egg and sperm donors
- Clinic staff



Assisted reproduction

- Standard fertility treatments, but also genetic testing and new treatments
- Innovations in research

How we work for high quality

Whilst staff working in licensed clinics have the greatest impact on patient care, we have a clear role to play as the fertility regulator. We see our role in improving the quality of care as:

Setting standards

Increasing and informing choice

Demonstrating efficiency, economy and value

We will

- Improve the quality and safety of care through our regulatory activities
- Improve the lifelong experience for donors, donor-conceived people, patients using donor conception, and their wider families
- Use the data in the register of treatments to improve outcomes and research
- Ensure that patients have access to high quality meaningful information
- Ensure the HFEA remains demonstrably good value for the public, the sector and Government

What we will do

Setting standards

Objectives

We will improve the quality and safety of care through our regulatory activities.

We will improve the lifelong experience for donors, donor-conceived people, patients using donor conception, and their wider families.

We will achieve this by

Making the patient experience integral to the way in which we assess clinics' performance.

Seeking patients' views, and understanding their perspective, as part of the way we work.

Publishing more HFEA data to drive improvements in clinic performance.

Acknowledging that treatment is often unsuccessful.

Working with professional groups to improve treatment success rates.

Providing information about donor conception directly to patients and donors through the Lifecycle campaign.

Ensuring that clinics prepare patients adequately for donation and fully understand their role and importance as a lifelong information provider.

Ensuring that egg and sperm donors are well supported and understand the lifelong commitment that follows from donation.

Collecting and publishing information regarding donor egg and sperm availability in the UK, and addressing impacts for patients (for example, by providing more information about the implications of treatment abroad).

With what benefits

Positive impact on quality of care, outcomes, safety, support, and information clinics provide to the HFEA and publish (e.g. on their websites).

Clearer understanding of what patients want, and what quality means to them.

Improved success rates (over time), and better support where treatment is unsuccessful.

Improved value for money for patients.

Improved information and understanding of the legal aspects and obligations of donation, for all involved.

Improved clarity of role and performance for clinics in relation to donation and associated information guardianship.

Improved experience for donors, donor-conceived people seeking information, and patients and their families.

Accurate picture of the UK position regarding availability of donated eggs and sperm. Fewer people who would prefer to have their treatment in the UK feel they have to go abroad for treatment.

Increasing and informing choice

Objectives

We will use the data in the HFEA register of treatments to improve outcomes and research.

We will ensure that patients have access to high quality meaningful information.

We will achieve this by

Improving the presentation of clinic comparison information on Choose a Fertility Clinic (CaFC)

Working with NHS Commissioning bodies to ensure that they commission the best services using available data.

Improved HFEA information about treatments available, scientific research, embryo and stem cell research and other fertility subjects, including reproductive issues, pre-conceptual care.

Working with clinics and scientific experts to publish information about new treatments.

Enhancing Choose a Fertility Clinic (CaFC) by including user experience scores.

Ensuring that clinics prepare and support patients and donors through the information they give them.

Collaborating with professional stakeholders to put patients in touch with better information and the right sort of care when they first realise they may have a fertility issue.

With what benefits

Published outcome data is more useful and sets up positive incentives for improvements.

Increased consumer choice and clinic comparability.

Commissioning decisions that are more effective for patients.

Increased information for patients and others.

Information is accessible, engaging and meaningful.

Patients better informed and better placed to deal with treatment issues and decisions.

Patients feel safe and know they can expect certain standards in clinics.

Patients more aware of the potential risks of different treatments as well as the possible benefits.

Increased public understanding of emerging new science and future treatment possibilities.

Prospective patients have clearer information and signposting.

Efficiency, economy and value

Objectives

We will ensure the HFEA remains demonstrably good value for the public, the sector and Government.

We will achieve this by

Ensuring the HFEA is easy to deal with and offers a professional and cost-effective service in all that it does.

Modifying our ways of working to ensure the organisation is responsive, agile, innovative and effective in achieving its strategic and statutory goals.

Improving the methods used to submit and verify register data.

With what benefits

Achieving measurable 'added value' and internal efficiency.

Reduced transactional costs for clinics and increased satisfaction.

Speedier service to patients when they interact directly with the HFEA.

'Right first time' data quality. Reduction in unnecessary effort by clinics submitting the data.

How we will work

In thinking about how we will deliver our future strategy and actions, it is necessary also to bear in mind the context in which we work, and our relationships with our stakeholders. The HFEA will work in the following ways:

- We will make the quality of care experienced by patients, donors and donor-conceived people our central priority and the primary consideration in our decision making.
- We will consult and collaborate widely - listening to and learning from those with an interest in what we do.
- We will communicate more with stakeholders before making decisions, and explain those decisions more clearly.
- We will take the time to implement decisions with appropriate stakeholder involvement, piloting new initiatives when appropriate.
- We will keep abreast of scientific and clinical innovations and actively consider what these might mean for the future quality of care.
- We will be a more agile and flexible organisation, changing course if needed in order to be responsive (both to stakeholders and to new priorities).
- We will continue to exercise our statutory functions consistently, proportionately, openly and fairly.
- We will observe the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in putting into effect the law as it governs the fertility sector.
- We will continue to treat people and their information with sensitivity, respect and confidentiality

The specific activities and projects through which we will deliver this strategy will be described in our annual business plans between 2014/15 and 2017/18.

Our business plans can be found on our website at:

www.hfea.gov.uk/Business-Plan.html

Any questions? Contact us at:

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