



# Information for gamete donors

You are receiving this flyer as your donated sperm or eggs were used in Western Australia after 1 December 2004. At the time of donation, or sometime afterwards, you consented to your identifiable information being shared with any children born as a result of your donation when they turn 16 years of age.

These donor-conceived people have started to turn 16 and are becoming eligible to access information about their donors. Depending on when your donation was used, your information will start to become available to your donor-conceived offspring.

## The law

On 1 December 2004, the *Human Reproductive Technology Act* (1991) was amended to ensure that donor-conceived people had a protected right to access certain identifiable information about their donor when they turn 16. Prior to your donation, the assisted reproduction clinic would have informed you of these requirements and obtained your consent to release this information.

Legally, you do not have any parental rights or responsibilities. Your donor-conceived offspring have no legal right to make a claim on your estate.

## Why do donor-conceived people apply for information?

Sentiments and thoughts around being donor-conceived can vary greatly from person to person. Some donor-conceived people want genetic or medical information only. Many are also interested in learning about the donor's personality, interests and whether they share common traits. Some wish to correspond. Some wish to meet.

It is likely to have been a big step for the donor-conceived person to lodge an application seeking information about their donor. They may be feeling apprehensive about the response they will receive. The experience in other parts of Australia is that donor-conceived people are respectful of the donor's wishes and sensitive to the donor and family's privacy.

## How do donor-conceived people access my information?

Once your donor-conceived offspring turn 16, they may request access to identifiable information. To do this, they must submit an application to the Department of Health and undergo an information sharing and support session, in which they explore their motivations for seeking the information, what they want to do with the information and whether they may wish to try and contact you. Once this session is complete, they will be provided with your identifiable information.

## What information will they receive?

Your donor-conceived offspring will receive the following information about you:

- full name
- date of birth
- occupation
- postcode at time of donation
- place of birth.

Non-identifying information such as eye and hair colour, height and build will also be provided.

## What information can I have?

The current legislation does not give donors any access to identifiable information about children born from their donation. If you wish to know how many children have resulted from your donation and their year of birth, you can do this by contacting your clinic. This may also help you to know when a donor-conceived person will be eligible to access information about you.

The Department of Health also funds a donor and offspring register which is run by the [Donor Conception Information Service](#) (DCIS). This service also supports people conceived before 1 December 2004, who do not have a right in law to access identifiable information about donors.

Donors, donor-conceived people and parents of donor-conceived children can sign up to this register. If a match is made, individuals are offered counselling and asked about their wishes for sharing information. This may be particularly relevant if you also donated before 1 December 2004, as the DCIS register is the only way for persons conceived before that date to connect with the donor. The DCIS register can also offer a way for recipients of a donation to link with their donor before a child is 16. Please visit the [DCIS website](#) for more information and to register your details.

## Thinking it over if you get contacted

Being contacted as a result of an application to the donor register should not be unexpected. Contact between a donor-conceived person and their donor is only permissible with the consent of both parties. If you register with the DCIS and let them know of your preference for contact in advance, they can advise the donor-conceived person at the time they are given your details.

While the donor-conceived person may have considered their application and its consequences for some time, you are likely to need to think through the implications of this application for you and those close to you.

## At home DNA and genealogy tests

There has been a growing popularity in the use of at home DNA genealogy tests. People use these tests to build family trees and find out more about their genetic origins. There are numerous cases in Australia and around the world of donor conceived-people finding their donor through tests such as these.

It is important to know that connections may still be made through these networks, even if you have not taken one of these tests yourself. It is possible that a donor-conceived person may contact you as a result of one of these tests, rather than going through the DCIS register to access information.

## What support can I access via the DCIS?

The linking of donor-conceived offspring and donors can be both challenging and rewarding. If you have joined the DCIS register you can access the support services provided. The DCIS facilitates donor matching support services on behalf of the Department of Health.

## More information

Please contact the Donor Conception Information Service for any additional information.

Email: [dcis@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:dcis@health.wa.gov.au)

Phone: 0457 619 376

Website: [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Donor-conception-information-service](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Donor-conception-information-service)

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