



# 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 old.

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

## The law

On 1 December 2004 the *Human Reproductive Technology Act* was changed 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?

Knowing where you come from is important for many people as reflected in the popularity of building family trees and visiting ancestral homes. 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 about their donor and they may be feeling apprehensive about their response. The experience in other parts of Australia has been that donor-conceived people are respectful of the donor's wishes and sensitive to you and your 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 make 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 voluntary Donor and Offspring Register which is run by JIGSAW DNA Connect. This was established primarily for those conceived before 1 December 2004 who do not have a legislated right 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 voluntary register is the only way for children conceived before that date to connect with the donor. The voluntary register can also offer a way for recipients of a donation to link with the donor before a child is 16. Please visit the [JIGSAW website](#) form more information and to sign up.

## Thinking it over if you get contacted

Being contacted as a result of an application by your donor offspring to the Donor Register may be unexpected. You may not have given much thought to the donations you made, but perhaps you have wondered whether children had been born as a result. You may have wondered whether they resemble you or if you share personality traits.

It is possible that you have not told your partner or children about your donation. 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 Department of Health process.

## What support can I access?

We recognise that the linking of donor-conceived offspring and donors can be both challenging and rewarding.

If you have joined the JIGSAW DNA Connect Donor and Offspring Register, you can access their support services.

A new service is currently being established which will provide donor linkage support services on behalf of the Department of Health. It is anticipated this service will commence on 1 January 2023. For more information or to keep up to date please contact the Reproductive Technology Unit.

## More information

Please contact the Reproductive Technology Unit for any additional information.

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

Phone: (08) 6373 2237

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