



Media Statement

21 June, 2011

Statement on the destruction of sperm under the ART Act

The Royal Women's Hospital believes the Assisted Reproductive Technology Act (ART) (2008) needs to be changed and we are very supportive of the step Minister Davis has taken by commissioning a review to explore the issues.

A group of men who have had their sperm stored, as teenagers, to protect their fertility has been caught up in an unintended consequence of the ART Act.

Under the Act it is the patient's responsibility, not the Hospital's to apply to extend the storage of their sperm. The hospital is not part of the application or approval process. The Women's does send courtesy reminders to patients to assist them in looking after their interests and protect their rights.

The hospital does its best to contact individuals but it is only the individual concerned that can apply for an extension. We believe the law should change to allow the hospital to retain specimens from those who have failed to extend, at least until we can obtain clear instructions from the men. To do otherwise puts at an end any prospects of their future fertility and we believe more effort should be made before specimens are destroyed, an irreversible act.

The Royal Women's Hospital looks forward to working with Dr Perrignon to resolve the unintended consequences from the Act for the benefit of Victorian families.

For more information please call:

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