

As a parent of 3 donor conceived children from 1977 to 1982, the prevailing counselling of the day, was to adhere to secrecy regarding the method of their conception. It was advocated that this would ensure that our children would grow up in a “normal” family environment and that legally, the husband of the marriage would be assumed to be their father.

When my children became adults and found out the “truth” it was a shock to them & brought with it many questions about their background & identity. This has affected each one differently.

My youngest daughter has quite amazingly been able to not only make contact with her biological father, but over the ensuing years, establish a good relationship with him & indeed, he is now very much a part of our family.

Hindsight is always a great thing – and as we had missed the opportunity for openness & truth from a young age, the emotional hurdles have had to be overcome to ensure mature understanding adults that are able to come to terms of their background.

I believe that it is imperative that the rights of all donor conceived children should be upheld as to the knowledge of their medical history, heritage & disclosure of non-identifying information, especially the number of possible half siblings. The risk of marrying a half sibling needs to be considered.

I respect that the donor has a right to decide what information they would like to be made available & if they want contact with their offspring or not, and I believe that this should be upheld. A voluntary register for retrospective conceptions would assist greatly, however, this needs to be advertised more and ensure that the community is made aware of its availability.

This awareness will also allow donor parents to decide if they or their children wish to register as well.

The number of conceived offspring from donors needs to be limited & perhaps a national registry will ensure that this will happen.

One of the biggest issues that I personally found missing was adequate wise counselling regarding the whole process. All parties need to have counselling to ensure that all avenues are looked at & correct decisions made as to the best action to take for all concerned.

Thank you for considering my petition.