

To the Senate Inquiry into Donor Conception in Australia.

My name is Adam Quinlivan and I am a donor conceived adult. I did not find out about being donor conceived until I was 25 years old. This came as quite a shock to me. In that moment, suddenly my Dad and all his family felt ripped away from me and replaced with nothing. Half of my identity is a mystery.

Efforts to find out who the donor was and if there are any half-siblings are still ongoing and it is frustrating work. Are donor conceived adults, born prior to recent legislation, to be the only group of people with no rights to find out who their biological relatives are?

(a) donor conception regulation and legislation across federal and state jurisdictions.

The same retrospective laws that allow adoptees to find out who their birth parents are should also apply to donor conceived individuals.

Records of donation need to be made available retrospectively. Not just to donor conceived but also to donors, recipients and relatives to donors and recipients.

I know of a situation where the elderly parents of a deceased sperm donor are looking for any donor offspring conceived from him. There needs to be something in place to help people in their situation too.

Along with this I would like to see a voluntary DNA database and testing facility set up like UK Donorlink (<http://www.ukdonorlink.org.uk>) for here in Australia.

Current legislation allows donor conceived people to find out who the donor is once they reach 18 but this is not enough. There are more situations that need to be catered for.

There needs to be legislation, nationally, that allows for, but is not limited to:

- Consenting donors and recipients to have contact prior to the donor conceived person turning 18.
- Consenting relatives of the donor, e.g. grand parents, and recipients to have contact prior to the donor conceived person turning 18, even if the donor does not want contact.
- Different sets of parents, with their consents, who used the same donor to be able to contact each other, regardless of the age of the donor conceived. This allows half-siblings to meet while they are children.
- Donor conceived, when they turn 18 should find out who the donor is and about all of their half-siblings.
- The donor should find out who a donor conceived person is when they turn 18.

Whatever legislation is decided upon must be consistent and apply at a national level.

(b) the conduct of clinics and medical services, including:

(i) payments for donors

There should be no payments for donors, egg or sperm. Sperm and eggs are used to create a life, they are not to sell as a commodity.

(ii) management of data relating to donor conception, and

Clinics need more transparency and accountability. Clinics hold all the records around a donation and there is no motivation for the clinic to then help donors, donor conceived and recipients to

contact each other, even if all parties agree.

Either the records are to be turned over to a government department or clinics must accept a role that they continue to help donors and recipients and donor conceived as required and do so accurately and truthfully.

(iii) provision of appropriate counselling and support services;

Continue with the counselling and support services for donors and recipients. From what I have heard these are good services.

(c) the number of offspring born from each donor with reference to the risk of consanguine relationships; and

The potential for consanguine relationships is always present when there is anonymous donation. It's even higher when so many donor conceived people don't know that they are donor conceived, and are localised to a particular area and age group.

Limiting the number of offspring born from a known donor doesn't really address this situation, however having hundreds of siblings in an area won't help the situation either.

I think the limit to 10 families is fair at the moment.

Consanguinity comes from anonymity of donors and half-siblings.

I personally believe there should be no anonymity involved with donor conception but outside of the clinics in Australia, there is no way to stop this from happening.

As I mentioned earlier a voluntary DNA register would help in this regard. It's probably the only accurate way we have to find out if two people are related, if there is at least one unknown biological parent.

(d) the rights of donor conceived individuals.

Donor conceived should have the right to identifying information about their donor and half-siblings. This needs to be retrospective.

Donor conceived should have access to records in regards to themselves from clinics.

Donor conceived should have access to a voluntary DNA register at a national level.

Thankyou.