

This response was submitted to the evidence call held by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on Donor conception: ethical aspects of information sharing between 21 March 2012 and 15 May 2012. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

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Consultation questions

1. What ethical concerns arise in the disclosure, or not, of information in connection with donor conception?
 - Individuals conceived through donor insemination (DI) are shocked when they are told about their origins. In fact, many individuals born as a result of donor conception in Japan face their identity crisis.)
 - Who should disclose the information on donor conception to a child? (Mother, father, donor (biological father), a doctor who performs the procedure, child care centre or The Ministry of Health, etc.?)
 - When and where should a child be told about the information on donor conception?
2. Is the disclosure of a child's donor conception essentially a matter for each individual family to decide? What if there is disagreement within the family? Who else should have a role in making this decision?

No. I believe children have a right to know about their origins. So, those who are involved in donor conception such as parents, donors, doctors have a moral responsibility to tell children about their conception.

3. What information, if any, do parents need about a donor in order to enable them to carry out their parenting role? Please explain.

Parents need at least donor's gender, age, nationality, religion, medical history, if he is heterosexual or homosexual and if he is also a donor-conceived child.

4. What information might a donor-conceived person need about the donor, either during childhood or once they become adult? Please explain.

According to one research conducted in Japan, 2006, the information donor-conceived person wants to know about the donor includes not only name, age, address, academic background, job history and medical history, but also the

donor's personality. The person wants to know these by meeting the donor if possible.

5. How significant is information about the medical history of the donor and the donor's family for the health and wellbeing of donor-conceived offspring? Do you know of any examples or evidence in this area?

It is significantly important for donor-conceived offspring to know the donor's medical history because, without the information, they cannot predict their inherited risk for any diseases or cancer. A Japanese woman conceived via donor insemination tells that she feels bad when asked about her father's medical history in the hospital because she does not know about it at all and cannot answer this type of question. (In Japan, since there is no law regarding assisted reproductive technologies such as donor insemination which protects donor-conceived offspring's right to know about their origins, it is impossible for them to know about the donor's information even if they want.)

6. Where information about inherited medical risk becomes apparent after donation has taken place, who should be told, and by whom?
7. What is the impact on donor-conceived offspring of finding out about their donor conception at different ages: for example medically, psychologically and socially? Do you know of any examples or evidence in this area?

I believe that it is better for parents to tell donor-conceived offspring about their origins as early as possible because, as a person born through donor insemination says, the secrecy of artificial insemination by donor leads to the destruction between the child and parents. However, this does not mean that there is no psychological damage on DI offspring if they grow up, being told about their conception as a child.

8. What is the impact on donor-conceived offspring of making contact with either the donor or any previously unknown half siblings? Do you know of any examples or evidence in this area?

A Japanese woman said that she became eager to know who the donor was when she was told that she was conceived through donor insemination. It does not mean she wants the donor to be her father. But if she knew about the donor, she could love him and herself more. She wanted to make a connection with who she is she have ignored.

9. What interests do donors and donors' families have in receiving any form of information about a child born as a result of the donation?

I guess information donors are interested in receiving about a child born as a result of the donation are as follows.

- gender, height, weight, facial feature, character, favourite sports or activity and where he/she lives.

10. What responsibilities arise in connection with the disclosure of information? Where do these responsibilities lie? (for example with government, fertility clinics, professionals or families?)

Government has a responsibility to guarantee children's right to know about their origins by law. If donor-conceived offspring ask for the information about donors, fertility clinics have to disclose it. Donors have to explain to donor-conceived offspring why they donated their sperms. (just for help, money or anything?)

11. What support is required in connection with these responsibilities?

Child care workers or social workers should be consulted about how to disclose the information.

12. Do you have any other comments? Please highlight any relevant areas you think we have omitted, or any other views you would like to express about information disclosure in the context of donor conception.