

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
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MAKING STARTING A FAMILY FAIRER FOR ALL VICTORIANS

The Andrews Labor Government's landmark reforms to assisted reproductive treatment (ART) which makes starting a family more accessible have commenced.

Changes to ART laws were enshrined in legislation in October and one of these major reforms starts this week to enable more families to access donor gametes to extend their families.

The new laws come following the independent review by Michael Gorton AM and are part of a major push to make sure more Victorians have access to safer, higher-quality treatment – free from discrimination.

The changes in place from this week will address discrimination and allow people in a same sex couples to carry their children using the same donor under a '10 family limit' rather than the previous '10 women limit', ensuring they are recognised as a family and their children can have genetically related siblings.

A number of reforms have already commenced, including protecting the rights of surrogates in managing their pregnancy and ensuring parents providing gametes for their own use are not treated as donors and removing discriminatory barriers for separated women, expanding and clarifying how surrogate mothers are reimbursed.

Other major changes will improve access for single women, LGBTIQ+ Victorians and rural and regional Victorians by allowing nurses and other health professionals within registered ART clinics to carry out procedures under the supervision and direction of a doctor. Barriers will also be removed to allow doctors outside of registered clinics to carry out artificial insemination.

Other reforms will also allow a surrogate's partner to be reimbursed costs incurred as a direct result of the surrogacy and provide more decision-making certainty for Victorians creating or extending their families using embryos formed with the generous assistance of donors.

The Gorton review made 80 wide-ranging recommendations, and as part of the staged response to the review, these new laws will progressively be delivered. The review found the establishment of public fertility services was critical to making the system fairer and was strongly supported by many stakeholders, including private providers.

This is why the Labor Government is also investing \$70 million to establish public fertility care services, which will help up to 4,000 Victorians every year start their family – saving them on average \$10,000 each.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"We're making IVF more accessible for all Victorians – these reforms will be life changing for thousands of Victorian families every year."

"Assisted reproductive treatment helps many Victorians achieve their dreams of starting a family, but we know the journey is an emotional rollercoaster – these laws deliver on our promise to make treatments fairer, more affordable and easier to access for all Victorians."