

BOURN HALL CLINIC THRILLED BY RESPONSE OF LOCAL WOMEN TO EGG APPEAL

Bourn Hall is delighted with the response to its recent appeal for egg donors. The call to action was driven by a dramatic fall in the number of women coming forward for egg donation.

The Easter Dozen appeal was launched at the end of March to try and get 12 women to come forward to donate eggs; this would give 24 childless couples the chance of a much-wanted baby. The clinic has experienced a 50% fall in egg donors and last year there were only 27 donations compared to 42 the year before

The Appeal was supported by Q103 and the Cambridge Evening News and also involved a poster appeal throughout Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Over 100 women have contacted the clinic in response to the appeal, from these 60 met the initial criteria and were sent information packs.

Gillian Bellars, egg co-ordinator at the clinic explains, "We are delighted with the response of the appeal and we would encourage more women to come forward. We have more than reached our goal of 12 women, which is wonderful news for the childless couples on the waiting list – some of whom have been waiting for over two years.

Fifty women were identified as suitable egg donors and 13 are currently considering egg donation, of which 4 are undergoing screening.

"With these things, it does take a while to get to the stage of egg donation as often the women need to wait until they have finished breast-feeding or they come off the contraceptive pill before we can proceed. If there are any other women under 36 who feel they could give a couple the chance of a baby we would love to hear from them, even if it is just an informal chat to find out what is involved."

35 year old Kathy from Cambridge heard about the appeal and knew that this was her chance to help make a difference.

She explains, "I wasn't your typical 'mum' type. In fact, I never wanted children and I never felt broody around babies. However, three years ago, I became pregnant by accident and now have a little boy.

"Luckily, from the moment my son was born my views on having children went out of the window. I suddenly felt fulfilled, focused and had a real sense of purpose in my life.

"I don't want to have any more children but experiencing the joy that my little boy brings me has made me think a lot about how sad it must be for women who can't have children naturally. I felt I wanted to be able to do something to help.

"Donating eggs is a commitment but it is one I feel happy to make knowing the wonderful impact it is going to have on, hopefully, a number of couples."

More follows...

To donate you need to be healthy and aged from 18 to 35. The eggs are donated anonymously and unlike adoption the recipient becomes the 'birth mother'. Donors can be told, on request, if a birth has resulted from their donation. Full information about all aspects of donating eggs is given and Gillian talks it all through with the potential donor before that person needs to make a decision. The clinic is able to provide a generous allowance for expenses.

Ideally egg donors will have completed their families or decided not to have children, but as Gillian explains, all kinds of people come forward: "Often it is because they know of a friend or relative who can't conceive, and want to do something to help them. In these cases the eggs can be donated anonymously to other couples on the list, which would move their friend/relative to the top of the list."

Call Gillian Bellars at Bourn Hall Clinic on 01954 717221.

- ENDS -

For press enquiries please contact:

Rachel Holdsworth/Justine Smith, PR consultants, Holdsworth Associates 01954 202789,
Rachel@holdsworth-associates.co.uk.

About Bourn Hall Limited

Bourn Hall Limited provides services in two fields; Bourn Hall Clinic, the world's first and best known assisted conception clinic, established in 1980 by Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards, the pioneers of IVF. And LCG Bioscience, a contract research organisation, which provides exploratory phase human clinical development services for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries which was founded by Mike Macnamee in 1993.

Bourn Hall Limited is located at Bourn Hall, Bourn, Cambridge, CB3 7TR, UK
Tel 01954 719111.

Contact: Mike Macnamee, Chief Executive, mike.macnamee@LCG-Bourn.co.uk
www.LCG-Bioscience.com and www.Bourn-Hall-Clinic.co.uk