

## **RECORD IVF SUCCESS FOR NHS FUNDED PATIENTS**

“It is absolutely fantastic’ says Tracey Wakefield, proud mother of twins, born on 26<sup>th</sup> January. Tracey is one of the twenty-five women that have become pregnant as a result of IVF treatment at Bourn Hall funded by Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust.

The PCT has agreed a package of care for its patients that enable 100 couples a year up to two cycles of treatment at Bourn Hall. Of the 29 women that have completed treatment under the 2006/7 contract 25 have become pregnant.

The partnership with Bourn Hall is now in its eighth year and is providing a year-on-year improvement in success rate, which averages at 41.7 per cent. National average success rates are 28.2% for women under 35 after each cycle of IVF dropping to 10.6% for women aged 40 to 42.

Taneisha Robinson-Scanlon, Acute Commissioning Manager at Bedfordshire PCT said:

“Through our partnership with Bourn Hall we can contract out the specialist parts of the fertility treatment while maintaining much of the patient care within the trust.

“Patients are referred by their GP to a consultant at Bedford Hospital and Luton and Dunstable Hospital. If they meet the criteria according to NICE guidelines they are then referred to Bourn Hall for treatment.

“Patients are invited to attend an Open Day at Bourn Hall which provides an in-depth explanation of the treatment and a counselling session so that couples have all the information they need.

“All patients that meet the criteria have equal access to treatment and this includes many women in their late 30s, so considering this, the success rates are exceptional,” Taneisha concludes.

The specification for the provision of services was developed through discussion between the PCT and Bourn Hall, and it was agreed that the optimum return on investment would be achieved by funding two cycles of treatment as the success rates are considerably higher. Additionally as the second cycle may use frozen embryos created and stored following the first cycle it doesn’t require the expensive drugs, so making the treatment cost-effective.

Bourn Hall is the world’s first IVF clinic, it was established as a private clinic after founders Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards failed to gain public funding for their groundbreaking IVF treatment. It was the first private clinic to take on NHS contracts 16 years ago and approximately 15% of Bourn Hall’s patients are NHS funded.

The clinic has continually invested in research and development and has an international reputation for its pioneering techniques in male factor infertility, embryo freezing and blastocyst culture - a technique where the embryos are kept longer in culture which has greatly improved success rates.

Mike Macnamee, Chief Executive of Bourn Hall comments that the NHS patients benefit from recent advances at the clinic that are improving the efficacy of IVF treatment.

“By working with Bourn Hall the NHS gains access to the latest thinking and techniques in this area. Techniques such as blastocyst culture greatly increase success rates but are technically challenging.”

He concluded, “It was always our founders’ dream that IVF should be available to all who could benefit and Bedfordshire PCT is making that possible with over 450 couples, over 8 years from the region benefiting from our services which have been fully funded by the NHS”

- ENDS -

### **Notes for Editors:**

Facts and Figure taken from HFEA web site.

- National IVF Live birth rate (Guide to infertility 2006-7)

Live births per cycle started: from 28.2% for women less than 35 years falling to 18.3% for women aged 38-39.

Live births per thaw cycle (ie from frozen embryos): from 17.9% for women less than 35 years falling to 12.3% for women aged 38-39.

### **Criteria for eligibility for treatment**

The Government has said that, from 1 April 2005, all women with appropriate clinical need should have at least 1 cycle of treatment paid for by the NHS. Local health bodies will apply their own eligibility criteria.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines suggest that couples should be offered up to 3 cycles of IVF on the NHS if the woman is aged 23-39 years and the couple has an identified cause for their infertility, or have not conceived after 3 years.

NICE recommended that it was appropriate to fund IVF treatment when the chances of success were more than 10%.

[http://www.hfea.gov.uk/cps/rde/xchg/SID-3F57D79B-206D1BDC/hfea/hs.xsl/1215.html#Latest\\_annual\\_figures](http://www.hfea.gov.uk/cps/rde/xchg/SID-3F57D79B-206D1BDC/hfea/hs.xsl/1215.html#Latest_annual_figures)

### **Further information, please contact:**

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## **About Bourn Hall Clinic**

Bourn Hall Clinic, is the world's first and best known assisted conception clinic, established in 1980 by Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards, the pioneers of IVF. Through innovative thinking the clinic maintains a leading role in the field.

Bourn Hall Limited is located at Bourn Hall, Bourn, Cambridge, CB3 7TR, UK  
Tel 01954 719111. [www.Bourn-Hall-Clinic.co.uk](http://www.Bourn-Hall-Clinic.co.uk)