



Fact sheet 7: Access to information

This fact sheet describes the ways that different types of information may be accessed by donor-conceived people, parents of children who are donor-conceived and donors. The process for access to information depends on when a person was conceived, the type of information requested, and the consent of the people involved.

Reproductive Technology Registers

Fertility clinics are required by law to provide your details to the Department of Health. This information is recorded in a secure computer database called the Reproductive Technology Registers, which can only be accessed by specially appointed officers.

The type of information that is recorded includes non-identifying and identifying information.

Non-identifying information

Non-identifying information about a donor includes:

- donor identification code
- physical description
- marital status
- education and occupation
- ethnic background
- personal interests and hobbies
- health and family history
- optional personal statement

Identifying information

Identifying information includes the name and date of birth of donors and people who have had donor-assisted conception treatment.

Donor-conceived person (conceived on or after 1 December 2004)

When a person conceived with the assistance of a donor on or after 1 December 2004 reaches 16 years of age they have a legal right to identifying information about their donor. This information can only be released after the donor-conceived person has undertaken counselling.

Parents of a donor-conceived child

The law also changed on 1 December 2004 to permit sharing of identifying information where children are under 16 years of age. Parents may consent on their own behalf and on behalf of their children to sharing of identifying information. Everyone involved must give their consent and the release of information must not disclose the identity of any person who has not given consent. Counselling must be undertaken before this information can be released (see fact sheet 8 – Counselling)

Donor-conceived people (conceived before 1 December 2004)

The changes to the law on 1 December 2004 did not have any force on events in the past. This means that for people who were conceived through donor-assisted conception before this time have no automatic right of access to identifying information.

A donor-conceived person who is age 18 or over can join the Voluntary Register.

The WA Voluntary Register was established so that people might be able to find out more about their donor or donor-related families. If the donor, parent of a donor conceived child or a person who shares the same donor has also joined the Voluntary Register, there may be an opportunity to obtain additional information (non-identifying information or personal statement). Identifying information can only be provided when consent is given by all the people involved and counselling has been undertaken (see Fact sheet 8: [Counselling](#)). Further details can be found on the Department of Health website voluntaryregister.health.wa.gov.au or contact 9222 4186.

The records from donor-conception treatment before 1993 are often incomplete as the practices were very different and parents were not encouraged to 'tell'. Therefore, there may be occasions when no information will be found. However, the more people who join the Voluntary Register then the greater the chance of finding the donor or other families who share the same donor.

Donors

Donors may access non-identifying information about the number of families they have helped to create, the number of children born from their donation, their gender and year of birth. The fertility clinic can provide this information to donors.

Donors are encouraged to join the Voluntary Register so that a donor-conceived person may know more about their genetic relations and/ or have the opportunity to have access to identifying information. The donor decides the level of information that is provided.

Additional resources

Donor Conception Network www.dcnetwork.org

Telling your child about their conception <http://www.varta.org.au/time-to-tell>

Meeting your donor / donor-conceived person <http://www.varta.org.au/information-support/donor-conception/donor-conception-register-services>

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