

International Federation of Fertility Societies

Policy Statement 2

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Cross Border treatment

Cross border treatment, sometimes colloquially known as Reproductive tourism, is defined as patients crossing international boundaries for the purposes of obtaining infertility treatment.

This process is not unique to this area of medical treatment and is normally driven by the lack of availability of the required treatment in the patient's own country.

In infertility the most common reasons for couples to seek treatment outside their own country is to obtain donor gametes, achieve surrogacy arrangements and access IVF and related treatments which for legal, religious or access reasons are not available in their own country or to seek novel treatments which are not widely available e.g. pre-implantation genetic diagnosis.

The IFFS is concerned about this increasing trend for patients to seek infertility treatment outside their country for a number of reasons: a) the increased costs and stress that this poses; b) the lack of uniformity of standards of practice and c) accountability for the management of complications arising from treatment.

Whilst acknowledging the motives which cause patients to seek help outside their own national boundaries, the IFFS regards patient safety as paramount and calls for international collaboration to develop uniform clinical and safety standards.