

Our Ref: ID 1863

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group
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Tel: 0151 651 0011

Re: Freedom of Information Request - In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) for female same-sex couples

Thank you for your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received into this office on 17th March 2021.

You Asked for:

1. Please disclose:
 - a. Whether or not NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) funds In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) services for female same-sex couples?
 - b. If so, how many cycles of IVF per couple does the CCG fund per couple?
2. If the answer to (1a) is yes, please disclose:
 - a. Under NHS Wirral CCG's current policy, how many cycles of artificial insemination must be undertaken by a female same-sex couple in order to become eligible to access NHS-funded IVF?
 - b. How many of the abovementioned cycles of artificial insemination must be self-funded by the couple?
3. Please disclose whether or not fertility services using donor sperm are provided under NHS Wirral CCG?
4. Please disclose how many cycles of IVF have been provided to female same-sex couples, funded by NHS Wirral CCG, in the last:
 - a. One year (April 2020 – present)
 - b. Five years (April 2016 – present)
5. Please disclose:
 - a. Whether or not NHS Wirral CCG's policy re. IVF access for female same-sex couples has been subject to any legal challenge?
 - b. If so, how much money has been paid out by NHS Wirral CCG in settlements to resolve these challenges in the last five years (April 2016 – present)?

Our Response:

1. Please see the relevant sections (5.1 and 5.2) as below (from the NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Sub-fertility policy):
<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/media/1254/subfertility-policy-wirral-2017-18.pdf>

'Same Sex Couples & Single Women Eligibility Criteria

'5.1 This policy is intended, as per National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance, for people who have a possible pathological problem (physical or psychological) to explain their subfertility. The CCG will fund subfertility treatment for same sex couples and single women provided there is evidence of proven subfertility, defined as no live birth following artificial insemination (AI) of up to 6 cycles or proven by clinical investigation as per NICE guidance. All must be undertaken in a clinical setting with an initial clinical assessment and appropriate investigations.

5.2 The CCG will not fund the AI cycles referred to in 5.1 but will fund access to a clinical consultation to discuss options for attempting conception, further assessment and appropriate treatment'.

2. Please see the answer to question number 1.
3. Donor Insemination (DI) is not routinely commissioned. Please see section 11 of the sub-fertility policy for further information.
4. Unfortunately, NHS Wirral CCG does not hold this information. Please can I suggest that you contact Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH) for further information? I have included their contact details below, should you wish to do so: WUTH - wih-tr.AccessstoInformationOffice@nhs.net
5. NHS Wirral CCG's policy regarding In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) access for female same-sex couples has not been subject to any legal challenges.

We hope this information is useful, however if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Corporate Affairs Team (contact details at the top of this letter)

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