

HFEA SEX SELECTION CONSULTATION: QUESTIONNAIRE

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Organisation (if applicable): Guild of Catholic Doctors

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Position of person responding in organisation (if applicable):

Master

Do you agree to the HFEA making your response publicly available?

Agree Disagree

Those responding on behalf of an organisation:

Which of the following categories most closely describes the nature of your organisation?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical/scientific | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bioethical/social science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious and faith | <input type="checkbox"/> Pro life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |
-

Those responding as private individuals (optional):

Which of the following categories most closely describes the reason for your interest in the issues raised in this consultation?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical/scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient/consumer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |
-



Please respond by placing a tick in one box for each question below.

Regulation of Sperm Sorting (questions 1 and 2)

1. Sperm sorting should be regulated in the United Kingdom by the HFEA.

Agree Disagree Neither

Reasons:

Sperm sorting should not be regulated, it should be prohibited. Sperm sorting is gender discrimination. Parents do not have a right to demand a child of a specific sex. The reality is that if sperm sorting fails, society will demand a backup of abortion or PGD and destruction of 'wrong' sex

2. The use of sperm sorting should be permitted only when its reliability and absence of risk to health have been satisfactorily established.

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

It is not its reliability and safety which is the issue, but whether it should be permitted or not.

Uses of sperm sorting and PGD (questions 3 to 6)

3. The use of sperm sorting should be permitted in sex selection for medical reasons if the people seeking treatment request it.

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

We adhere to the position that the only acceptable form of conception of children is by natural intercourse. If sperm selection fails then logic would dictate that a backup method, eg abortion, is available to ensure the 'correct gender'

4. The use of sperm sorting should be permitted in sex selection for non-medical reasons.

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

Society has been opposed to 'designer babies', however, selection of any characteristic is in effect part of the process of designer babies. Gender discrimination will inevitably have a profound and detrimental effect on society, the practice elsewhere shows that there will be significant discrimination against girls. Once there is acceptance for one reason, logically all others become equally valid.

5. The use of preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) should be permitted for selecting the sex of offspring for non-medical reasons. (It is already available for medical reasons).

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

The reason given in Q4 applies. However the destruction of embryos failing to meet the required standard is more reprehensible than sperm sorting.

6. It would be preferable to combine sperm sorting with preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) when selecting the sex of offspring for medical reasons (rather than using either technique singly).

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

We find both methods unacceptable and combining them does not make it more acceptable.

Criteria for non-medical uses of sex selection (questions 7 and 8)

7. Sex selection (by either sperm sorting or PGD) should be permitted for non-medical reasons when a family has at least two children of one sex and none of the other sex.

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

We find all reasons for sex selection unacceptable. Furthermore there is no ethical reason why a process is acceptable after two children of one sex. Justification after one child (in a couple wishing only two children) could be argued, as could a position that the first child should be a boy.

8. Sex selection (by either sperm sorting or PGD) should be permitted for non-medical reasons other than family balancing.

Agree Disagree

Reasons:

Our reason given in response to question 4 applies.

Please send all three pages of your responses by January 22, 2003, to:
Vishnee Seenundun, Consultation Co-ordinator
HFEA, Paxton House, 30 Artillery Lane, London E1 7LS

Thank you for participating in this consultation.

