

Committee Secretary  
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee  
Parliament House  
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Dear Committee Secretary

### **Inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this Inquiry. Below, I address each of its terms of reference. Before doing so, I would like to make some general comments.

I make my submission in the capacity of a recipient parent with a donor conceived child. When I conceived my child, my partner and I selected a donor who had agreed to be identified and to be contacted. I had done my research, and knew that about two-thirds of donor conceived people have a desire to know their genetic heritage. As identification and contact were voluntary at the time (in NSW), we restricted our choice of donor to those who had agreed to both identity and contact. We have this consent in writing. We spent the first five years of our child's life telling them that they could contact their donor when they wished to do so (under the voluntary scheme applicable at that time, the procedure required us to contact the clinic). When my child was five, they asked to contact the donor. We contacted the clinic, as required. The clinic advised us that our donor had 'changed his mind'. Their interpretation of the NHMRC guidelines was that they could not even write to him to let him know someone was trying to make contact. In response, I cited the guidelines on numerous occasions. The clinic obfuscated, and avoided me. All in all, I spent four years trying to get them to act in accordance with the guidelines, all for nothing. In the end, the CEO of the company that had taken over my clinic (the third company after the one I had actually used), told me that, after all, they're just guidelines. In the end, I discovered that the donor had changed his mind the year my child was born, but the clinic did not tell me, resulting in great heartache for my child when we had to tell them years later that what they had been told their whole life thus far was untrue.

I subsequently applied to the clinic for records of the year of birth and gender of siblings. I eventually received a letter with four donor siblings. Then, after NSW changed its law to require clinics to provide information to a central donor register, I applied again through the donor registry as a recipient parent for the same information. This is because I knew that asking the registry would require the clinic to pass the information on to the registry for safe keeping. I was surprised that a response took a long time. I eventually received a response from the register, which contained a completely different list of donor siblings, a total of ten from this donor (the maximum permissible).



























