

SUBMISSION
BY A QUEENSLAND DONOR CONCEIVED PERSON (DCP)
TO THE QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT INQUIRY
INTO MATTERS RELATING TO
DONOR CONCEPTION INFORMATION

23 APRIL, 2022

By

Paul John Bellas, CSM

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

ART Location: Queensland Fertility Clinic, Wickham Terrace, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, Queensland (1982)

INTRODUCTION:

I am pleased to be able to respond to the call for submissions to this Assisted Reproduction Treatment (ART) Inquiry.

I had been informed at the age of 10 years that I was donor conceived. I would have liked to have met my Biological Father from a much earlier age, assuming by mutual consent.

For almost all of my life I have not known half of my family medical history. I have not known my Biological Father. I have not known that I have other siblings. I have not known my ethnicity or heritage. I had no one in my family that served in the military, except me and my brother.

I felt lost and helpless, with no way of finding out who I was or who my Biological Father was. I had all but given up. I had been told it was impossible to find out who my Donor was. There were no records. No possible way to answer any of my hundreds of questions.

Access to an Official Sperm Donor Register in Queensland/Australia would have assisted me from the outset.

My DNA Analysis on www.ancestry.com matched with my Donor in October, 2020, at the age of 37 years, and I was able to make first contact with my Donor [REDACTED]. We spoke over the phone, but have not met face-to-face as yet.

I was ecstatic! Finally, after all these years, I would be able to meet my Biological Father and find out about my family medical history. This is particularly important given my eldest son suffers from a number of conditions, Autism, Sensory Processing Disorder and ADHD, but the investigation into Neurofibromatosis has been impossible without the medical history from both sides of my family.

I have even been able to trace back my family tree back to the 1500s. Given my Polish heritage can only be traced back to 1850s due to WWI and WW2, this is simply amazing.

I am now in the process of building a relationship with my Biological Father. I have also been able to make contact with one of my half-brothers and two half-sisters, who are also donor conceived with the same Biological Father as myself (my children now have 8 cousins on my Biological Father's side that they are yet to meet).

I have exchanged many emails and photographs and I have started to get to know my Biological Father as a person. We have discussed our mutual desire to meet face-to-face and he seems equally keen to do so, although a suitable time and place has not yet been arranged. It is pleasing that we now have the opportunity to form a positive relationship with each other.

Even more exciting is the new extended family that I have found. It will take years to build the relationships with them all, but I already feel connected and loved.

My experience has shown me that there are many people, like me, who are searching for their identity and their place in the world.

I am happy to share my story as part of this Inquiry, in the hope that it will help bring families together. I would welcome the opportunity to be heard in person or via telephone, if that would be of assistance.

THE RIGHTS OF DONOR CONCEIVED PERSONS (Implying mutual consent where applicable)

As a Donor Conceived Person (DCP), I would like to have had the right to know:

1. That I was Donor Conceived from a much earlier age (i.e. possibly on my Birth Certificate)
2. The identity of my Sperm Donor and his contact details if possible (with mutual consent of course), and
3. Any medical history of relevance of the Sperm Donor (again, by mutual consent).

I, therefore, support the principle of retrospectivity when legislating to provide for the release of identifying information about Donors to Donor Conceived Persons, and vice versa (i.e. the release of

identifying information to Donors about their DC offspring). This identifying information should be made available by mutual consent by all relevant Parties at all times (if feasible).

I trust that this Submission is of value to this Queensland ART Inquiry, as well as of considerable value to my wife and 3 sons, my Recipient Mother and my three, or more, DC siblings.