

ACART Consultation on Informed Consent. Submission by the Office of Ethnic Communities.

Tēnā koutou katoa,

The Office of Ethnic Communities (formerly the Office of Ethnic Affairs) works to promote the benefits of ethnic diversity to develop prosperity for every New Zealander. One of the ways in which we do this is by providing policy advice to government agencies to ensure equal access for ethnic people (by which we mean any segment of the population within New Zealand society with cultural values, customs, beliefs, languages, traditions and characteristics that differ from the wider society). We have therefore considered the consultation document on informed consent and assisted reproductive technology with a view to ensuring equal access for ethnic communities in New Zealand.

We support the proposals being put forward, and wish to make two comments.

We consider that 'better access to information' (in Question 1) for donors and patients should include access to appropriate translation and interpretation in situations where there is any doubt about donors and patients' understanding of these issues as presented to them in English. We strongly recommend that qualified interpreters are used wherever possible, rather than relying on informal interpreting by friends or family members who might lack the necessary technical vocabulary and/or might take on an advocacy role. Using a bilingual person who is untrained in interpreting may risk compromising accuracy, neutrality and confidentiality. In addition, a donor or patient might not be happy to disclose all information with a person they know present.

We also recommend that ACART seek views and perspectives from assisted reproductive technology providers who deliver services to specific ethnic and cultural communities in New Zealand, and/or to NGOs with an interest in health issues among New Zealand's ethnic communities. The Office of Ethnic Communities can put forward some suggested contacts for the latter if this would be helpful.

We hope this is helpful.

Ngā mihi nunui,

Samantha Oakley | Diversity & Inclusion Policy Analyst
The Office of Ethnic Communities *Te Tari Matawaka*