**NHS licensed fertility services transition**

**Frequently Asked Questions for NHS-funded patients in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire**

**16 March 2018**

**1. What is happening to the provision of licensed fertility services in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire?**

Licensed fertility services include IVF and other treatments that are provided to patients under a licence issued by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). In the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire area, the GP-led clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) historically purchased these services on behalf of NHS patients from North Bristol Trust, which delivered them from the Bristol Centre for Reproductive Medicine (BCRM) at Southmead Hospital.

Following a strategic review in 2016, the Trust decided to stop providing licensed fertility treatments for NHS patients from the end of November 2017. Its contract with the CCGs for treatment referrals ended on 30 November 2017. BCRM continues as an HFEA Licensed Fertility Centre run since 1 March 2018 by Valentine Akande and Paul Wilson, formerly employed by NBT, as Consultant /Person Responsible and Laboratory Director, respectively.

**2. Who will deliver NHS licensed fertility services in the future?**

The following providers have been commissioned as part of a Qualified Provider Framework as providers of NHS licensed fertility treatment from 1 April 2018:

 St Michael’s Hospital, Bristol – IUI only

 Bath Fertility Clinic, Bath (consultations available in Bristol)

Bristol Centre for Reproductive Medicine (BCRM)

 CREATE, Birmingham and London (consultations and scans available in Bristol)

 London Women’s Clinic, Cardiff – (consultations and scans available in Bristol)

 Royal Devon & Exter NHS Foundation Trust, Exeter

The Centre for Reproductive & Genetic Health, London

Couples wishing to have their treatment at a provider not listed above should contact the CCG. Only Licensed Centres that provide assisted conception for NHS patients can be considered.

**3. Where will services be provided from in future?**

Many of the providers above deliver aspects of treatment from Bristol, ensuring that licensed services remain as accessible as possible for local NHS patients.

**4. Is Bristol Centre for Reproductive Medicine (BCRM) an option available?**

Yes, from 1 April 2018, BCRM are one of the approved providers on our Qualified Provider Framework .

**5. We wish to remain at BCRM, what are our options?**

Couples eligible for NHS funded treatment are able to confirm BCRM as their clinic of choice in response to their eligibility and choice letter they will receive from the Individual Funding Request Team.

**6. Will there be changes to the services available on the NHS?**

Services will be provided on the same basis as before and patients will have access to the same range of licensed fertility treatments.

**7. What does this mean for my funding for NHS treatment?**

If you are currently funded for NHS fertility assessment and treatment, that funding will continue. All funding is in place for a period of 12 months to allow time to set up and commence treatment, provided couples continue to fulfil the access criteria.

**8. I am a patient with samples stored at the Bristol Centre for Reproductive Medicine, what will happen to them?**

Frozen sperm, gametes and embryos will continue to be stored at the BCRM licensed centre until further notice. You will be contacted by the centre to let you know your options for future storage in the event of this position changing. No move of samples will be made without your informed consent.

**9. I moved provider from BCRM to continue with my NHS funded treatment, during the period they were unable to offer this service. Am I able to move back?**

No, all couples unable to progress treatment at BCRM after 30 November 2017 were offered a choice of alternative provision from providers available at that time. Treatment with your chosen provider should continue unless there are extenuating circumstances such as excessive waits. Individual cases can be considered by the Individual Funding Request team on an exceptional basis. Transfers cannot be undertaken where treatment has commenced.

**10. Is BCRM still accepting referrals for NHS patients?**

BCRM stopped accepting referrals and treating NHS patients atthe end of November 2017. They will re-open to NHS referral from 1 April 2018. Any NHS patients who had not begun their treatment by the end of November 2017 were written to with alternative provider options available to progress their treatment during this period.

**11. I am an NHS patient on a waiting list for donor eggs; what will happen?**

Patients on the BCRM waiting list were offered choice of alternative providers in December 2017. Patients moving to another provider were advised to consider waiting times at that provider. Providers were asked to take into account any time already spent waiting on a list at BCRM.