



BFS Statement on the new HFEA classification scheme for Treatment Add-ons

The British Fertility Society (BFS) supports attempts to provide fertility patients accurate information about their treatment options. Fertility treatment is the most highly-regulated field of medicine in the UK with its own specific regulator, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). The HFEA inspects all UK clinics and its recent 'State of the Sector' report shows that patients receive care that is effective and safe, with increasing success rates and a low risk of complications.

The technological and scientific advances that have enabled so many thousands of babies to be conceived in UK fertility clinics have been the result of an innovative and results-driven environment. In such a situation, fertility professionals have a duty to offer treatments which are supported by good evidence, while ensuring patients are made aware of the lack of evidence in relation to Add-ons. Members of the BFS have embraced the concept of ratings for Treatment Add-ons, but have also drawn attention to the deficiencies of a simplistic approach.

The BFS therefore welcomes the HFEA revision of its Treatment Add-on rating system, which significantly improves on the previous classification. The new system allows more detailed and accurate information to be provided to patients. Patients will be able to obtain more individualised information relevant to their specific situation and priorities.

The HFEA deserves credit for being the first in the world to introduce this type of systematic, unbiased patient information. We are hopeful that the new system will allow patients, in partnership with their trusted clinician, to make decisions about their treatment with greater confidence.

Note to editors:

The British Fertility Society (BFS) is a membership body for professionals working in all disciplines of reproductive medicine. The BFS is dedicated to raising the standards of practice, and actively promotes the sharing of knowledge, mentorship and research. It welcomes clinicians and scientists, (including doctors, nurses, counsellors, embryologists and andrologists) and other professional groups working in fertility, into its membership. It provides a voice for professionals in matters relating to regulation and funding of fertility treatment. The BFS is a unique multi-disciplinary organisation at the forefront of fertility in the UK, with an increasing global profile.