

British fertility clinic raffling human egg

March 14 2010

A British fertility clinic said Sunday it was raffling off a human egg this week to promote its "baby profiling" service, which it insists is legal under UK law.

The winner can select the egg donor by education, upbringing and racial background.

The London Bridge Fertility, [Gynaecology](#) and Genetics Centre said the treatment actually takes place in the United States.

Women interested in having a baby by in vitro [fertilisation](#) are invited to attend a seminar on Wednesday, which is organised by Bridge's US partner, the Genetics and IVF Institute (GIVF), based in Fairfax, Virginia.

The winner gets 13,000 pounds (19,750 dollars, 14,350 euros) worth of free IVF treatment in Virginia.

The sale of [eggs](#) for profit is banned in Britain, and donors have to agree that they can be identified and then contacted by their offspring once they turn 18. Donors are in short supply as a result.

US laws allow women to sell their eggs, and can make up to 10,000 dollars a time, depending on the desirability of their profile.

GIVF egg donors are university students or graduates aged 19 to 32. Smokers and overweight women are not admitted.

"There is an increase in the number of women in Britain who are seeking alternative routes (to domestic IVF)," said Michael Summers, consultant in [reproductive medicine](#) at the Bridge Centre.

"And it's much more difficult to find donors in the UK because of the policies in place," he told AFP.

Asked whether he could guarantee that the service is legal, he replied: "Yes, because it's the choice of the patient. We only provide information on the services available.

"Donor sperm has been available for a long time, and its profiling as well, because it's much easier to provide a sample", he added.

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