

Argentina to offer IVF for same-sex, straight couples

June 6 2013

Argentina on Wednesday approved in-vitro fertilization for same-sex and heterosexual couples in the national health care system, in theory ending problems many had with affording the procedures.

The move comes as barriers to gay marriage and adoption have fallen in a number of countries across mostly Catholic Latin America. Argentina became the first Latin American country to legalize gay marriage in 2010.

The Chamber of Deputies voted overwhelmingly in favor of the change after the Senate had earlier approved the measure.

Maria Elena Chieno, chair of the chamber's Health Care Committee, said the law "will help families who for years had to mortgage their homes or sell their belongings to afford having a child."

"IVF is the law, from today forward. More rights, more inclusion, better country," President Cristina Kirchner, Argentina's first elected woman president, said in a Twitter posting.

"Congratulations to the NGOs who pushed for this," she added.

Some officials estimate that up to 10-15 percent of couples in Argentina want IVF services but are unable to afford them.

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