

First study to look at Australians' use of surrogacy

August 15 2014



(Medical Xpress)—Research into how Australians use surrogacy shows that most people thinking about it are considering or using overseas compensated arrangements.

The study, published online today in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, surveyed people considering or already engaged in surrogacy.

The Jean Hailes Research Unit at Monash University and Surrogacy Australia found that only eight per cent of the 259 surveyed used

surrogacy in Australia. India and the US were the most common destinations for those who travelled overseas to access surrogacy.

Study co-author Dr Karin Hammarberg, Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at Monash University, said there were multiple reasons Australians were going overseas for surrogacy.

"These reasons included not being able to find a surrogate in Australia, concerns that asking a surrogate to carry a child for no reward is unfair, and concern that the surrogate might keep the child," Dr Hammarberg said.

Australian laws ban advertising for a surrogate and providing compensation to the surrogate, which contributes to people seeking surrogacy overseas.

"It was interesting to see that the study showed that state-based legislation criminalising overseas compensated surrogacy does not deter people from travelling overseas to access surrogacy," she said.

According to Dr Hammarberg there is a need to review surrogacy-related laws and regulations in order to allow more equitable access to surrogacy arrangements within Australia and to ensure that children born as a result of surrogacy have the same right as other Australian children to know their origin.

"Allowing surrogates to receive some compensation might make it easier to recruit surrogates in Australia and avoid the need for people to undertake unregulated [surrogacy](#) overseas," Dr Hammarberg said.

More information: *Medical Journal of Australia*,
[www.mja.com.au/journal/2014/20 ... aliens-use-surrogacy](http://www.mja.com.au/journal/2014/20...aliens-use-surrogacy)

Provided by Monash University

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