SEMEN DONORS WHO ARE OPEN TO CONTACT WITH THEIR OFFSPRING.

Kramer Wendy  (US) [1]

INTRODUCTION

The culture of gamete donation is undergoing a revolution. The previous practice of parents being secretive about their use of donated sperm, along with the accompanying anonymity of donors is changing and this has lead to more offspring being aware of their family building history. This in turn has lead to increasing numbers of offspring wanting to know or know about their unknown genetic parent. What does this mean for the donors, particularly those who were recruited on the basis of their being anonymous? How do donors view/understand their relationships with their families and their donor offspring? The results reported in this presentation relate to 164 former donors (76% from the USA) who now say they are willing to have contact with the offspring they helped to create.

METHODS

Online questionnaires were completed by 164 semen donors. The 45 question survey included multiple choice and open-ended items and covered contact with offspring, motivations, the donor and his family, changing views over time, medical and health issues, recruitment and patterns of donating. The open-ended questions provided the opportunity for respondents to reflect and expand on these issues.

RESULTS

77.5% say their motivation for donating was to help families who wanted children. 61% donated for the money and 41% to pass on their genes. 97.4% said that they thought about the offspring they had helped create and 93.8% said they were open to connecting with their offspring. 22% had connected with offspring at the time of the survey. 71.4% of donors were currently married or partnered and of these 91% had told their partner and 85% of the partners were open to connecting with the offspring. 57.7% of donors had children of their own and of these 38% know that their father has been a donor. A further 40% are too young to tell, and of these 85% will be told. Donors report that their feelings about donating have changed over time with the predominant theme being that they now realize donating semen was much more than a financial transaction.

INSTITUTE

[1] Donor Sibling Registry
CONCLUSIONS
The changing culture of gamete donation is impacting on all of the involved parties. Semen donors in this study are overwhelmingly open to contact/connection with their offspring and this result challenges the traditional view that donors wish to remain anonymous.