



# Your guide to surrogacy for intended parents

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There are many people who will not be able to have children without the generous help of someone else. Each situation is unique, but take comfort that you are not alone. While we aren't able to match you with a surrogate, we can provide you with ideas to find your own surrogate and help guide you through the process.

The decision to use a surrogate involves many considerations including long term psychological, social, health and legal implications. This document outlines specific information on the use of a surrogate at Repromed and it is intended to be read in partnership with the IVF Journey Planner that gives you detailed information.

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## WHAT IS INVOLVED

### 1. Consultation with Repromed doctor

One of our Repromed doctors will go through the treatments we offer. The doctor will also go through your medical history (for both partners, if applicable). Your surrogate will be required to see a Repromed doctor to be assessed for suitability. The doctor will go through your surrogate's medical and obstetric history and a physical examination, including a transvaginal ultrasound scan, will be performed at this time.

### 2. Meet our donor coordinator

Our donor coordinator will guide you through the steps below. They will discuss contacting your surrogate for information and to make initial appointments. Following the ECART application outcome the donor coordinator will also help guide you through the treatment process.

### 3. Screening

All parties involved will have a range of screening bloods to do before the process starts. The surrogate will need to do a second set of blood screening tests three months later. These results are valid for 6 months. Infectious screening will be repeated every 6 months and annually for your partner.

### 4. Visit one of our counsellors

You will be required to attend at least two counselling appointments approximately one month apart. Further appointments may be required if any other family members, significant others, or children need to be included. If you are in a long-term, live-in relationship, your partner will also need to be involved in counselling and be agreeable to all aspects of surrogacy. Your surrogate and their partner (if applicable) will also need to be seen for at least two sessions with our counsellor. Following the individual counselling for both parties a joint counselling session will be held between the surrogate and their partner (if applicable), and intended parent/s.

GOOD TO KNOW

#### Donor egg and/or donor sperm

If there is a need for you to include an egg or sperm donor in your family building and surrogacy arrangements they will also need to see a Repromed doctor and counsellors.

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## HART ACT:

Our counsellors will discuss in detail the Human Assisted Reproductive Technology Act (HART) 2004, which governs fertility treatment in New Zealand. Counselling is mandatory under the HART Act. The Act guidelines state that counsellors are required to demonstrate that intended parent/s and surrogates have discussed and understand a range of topics pertinent to the welfare of the potential child, the surrogate, and the intended parent/s and any existing children in families.

## ECART:

In New Zealand, clinic-assisted surrogacy is legal but highly regulated. All clinic-assisted surrogacy arrangements require approval from the Ethics Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technology (ECART) and the counsellors will inform you and guide you through this process. An ECART application incurs a charge which is inclusive of counselling for all parties involved, report preparation, application facilitation and the submission of the application to ECART. If your treatment is publicly funded, the cost of the ECART fee is not covered, and you will be charged prior to joint counselling. Note that the ECART application fee is non-refundable, irrespective of the outcome of the application.

## Legal consultation:

Both you and your surrogate are required to receive legal advice. Repromed will provide you with the names of lawyers who are experienced in surrogacy so you can arrange an appointment. The lawyer you see to provide advice about the surrogacy process will also be the lawyer who you work with once a baby is born and the adoption process is activated.

Please note, Repromed will not export embryos to international clinics for the purpose of undergoing commercial surrogacy arrangements.

## Obtaining ECART approval:

The counsellors will collate the reports from each of the counselling sessions, the medical reports, assessment report from Oranga Tamariki and the legal reports, and submit them in an application to ECART. ECART meets approximately 5 times a year and will provide a decision on the surrogacy within 4-6 weeks of meeting. Once the clinic has received an approval from ECART, treatment can begin.

## Adoption assessment:

The surrogate and their partner (if applicable) will be legally recognised as the child's parents until an adoption occurs. At the same time that you are working through the clinic ECART process, you will be advised to contact Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children to organise a social worker to guide you through the adoption assessment. Intended parent/s need to make a formal application for adoption of a child born by surrogacy.

## 5. Complete consent forms

To ensure understanding of the surrogacy process and the implications for the future, those embarking on surrogacy must fully understand and sign consent forms relating to the medical procedures and the surrogacy process. All parties involved (intended parent/s, surrogate, and partner if applicable) will be required to sign consent forms. The legal process and ethical approvals need to be completed before treatment can begin.

## 6. Start treatment

If you are using your own eggs, and have not yet created embryos, the IVF Journey Planner will explain the process of IVF in order to undergo an egg collection cycle. These eggs will then be fertilized using the sperm of your chosen partner and embryos will be created. The IVF Journey Planner also explains how your surrogate's menstrual cycle is monitored by our Repromed staff to ensure that the appropriate time is scheduled for the embryo transfer. Please refer to the IVF Journey Planner or talk to the donor link/surrogacy nurse for a full explanation of these processes.

## COSTS

The fee schedule for appointments and treatments is available on the Repromed website and provided as part of your Journey Planner pack of information at your first clinic visit. When the appropriate treatment has been decided, the donor coordinator is available to discuss the costs in detail with you.



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**The team at Repromed, including the doctors, counsellors, nurses, and scientists are here to support you.**

[repromed.co.nz](http://repromed.co.nz)