



BCRM

North Bristol **NHS**
NHS Trust

Fertility News

News from Bristol Centre for Reproductive Medicine • Autumn 2008

At the double: it's twins for BCRM's first mum and dad



The Wright twins, Emily (left) and Hannah (right)

A Long Ashton couple - and the staff who treated them - had plenty to celebrate on September 14th when the BCRM's very first birth saw Julie and Neil Wright become parents to twin girls, Hannah and Emily.

The twins were safely born with a normal delivery at Southmead at 34 weeks, the result of the couple's successful first cycle of IVF/ICSI just as the BCRM opened last New Year.

"We'd been trying for a baby for around three years before we were referred to Southmead," says Julie, a 37 year-old pensions administrator. "When I was found to be ovulating normally we then embarked on ICSI. Fertilised eggs were replaced on January 29th at the BCRM just as new carpets were being laid!"

Neil (38) adds: "The treatment was very patient-oriented and the staff friendly and understanding, from the BCRM's general manager down. This made a real difference and gave us confidence. I think

there's room for even more information targeted at men's infertility issues in particular so also found it helpful to find support by sharing our situation with others via infertility-focused internet chat rooms. It was good to read about other people's journeys - and it made me realise how fortunate we've been."

Inside this issue...

'Best in the West'

Patient compliment reflects HFEA results

On target for 18 week maximum wait

An appointment could be yours sooner than you think

Give life, give hope

Bristol donor women wanted as part of national campaign

Opening event marks successful first six months

More than 300 guests - including many of the 120 women who became pregnant in the Centre's first six months, plus their partners - were invited to the BCRM on July 18th for its official opening and a buffet lunch.

First pregnancy

The honour of cutting the ribbon fell to Sarah Attwell from Cheltenham, the first patient to become pregnant following IVF treatment at Bristol's brand new facility, and her husband Duncan. After several previous IVF cycles, Sarah successfully conceived through the BCRM in January and gave birth to a baby boy on 29th October whom they have named Joe.

Speakers at the celebration - a wonderful day for staff and patients - included Sonia Mills, chief executive of North Bristol NHS Trust, and clinical lead Peter Wardle who heads up the Centre's 70-strong team.



The BCRM building at Southmead Hospital

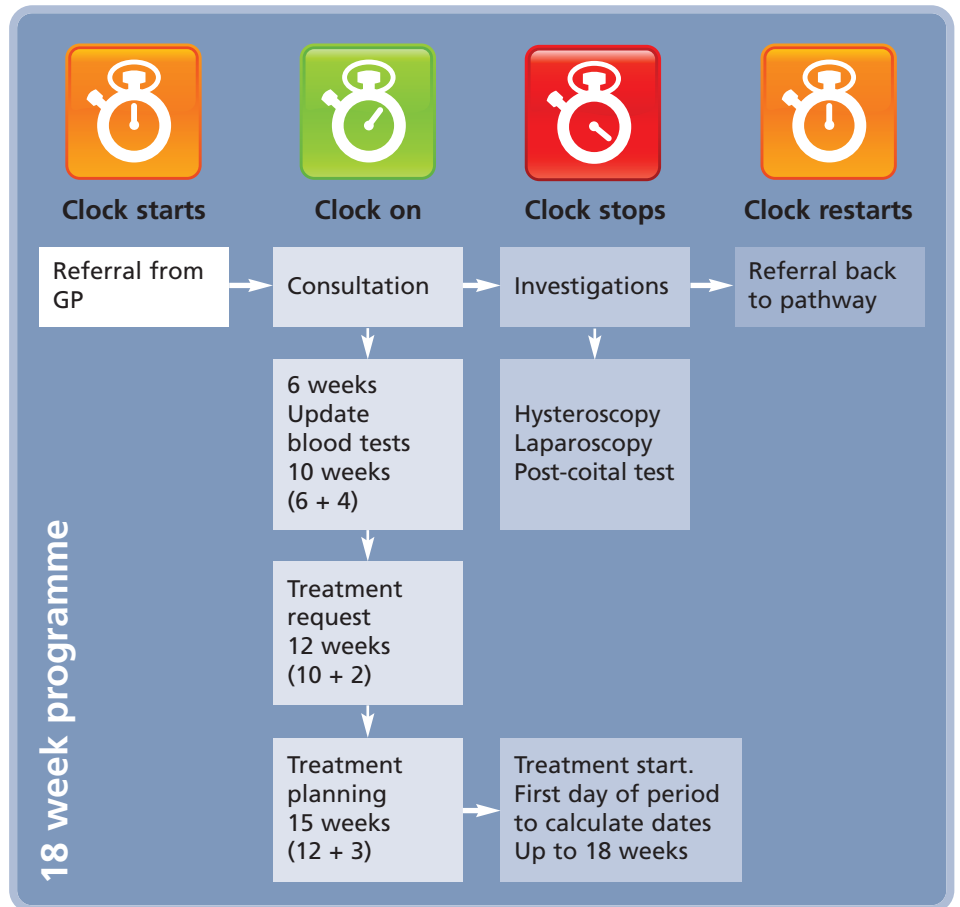
Doctors' Notes: support and information for referring GPs

Extra PCT funding reduces wait to 18 weeks

Patients are now able to undergo infertility treatment within the Government target of just 18 weeks as a result of additional funding from local PCTs.

The 'clock' starts the minute the Centre receives a referral letter from the GP. Ensuring all hard copies of test results are available with the referral smoothes the patient journey. Any outstanding tests are then explained in a letter sent to the patient in time for their first consultation.

To find out more about the pre-appointment tests required simply contact BCRM.



Pre-appointment testing speeds access to 18 week pathway

GPs can best help their patients benefit from BCRM's maximum 18 week wait commitment by:

- Working through all items on our pre-appointment checklist
- Taking into account that the FSH (follicle-stimulating hormone) test can only be done once a month and is cycle-dependant - so if done pre-referral, can save time
- Checking basic female eligibility criteria e.g. BMI < 30
- Referring patients to the HFEA patients' guide available from www.hfea.gov.uk and the BCRM website at www.repromed.co.uk
- Reminding male patients that ICSI treatment can now be NHS-funded

Improving the way we share knowledge with GPs through study days and practice visits

Although the Centre has successfully hosted two recent GP open evenings, delegate feedback indicates that the evening format makes it difficult for some GPs to attend.

As an alternative we're therefore now planning a GP study day in 2009 - details and date TBA. We're also able to deliver GP presentations at individual practices or health centres on request.

If you or your colleagues would like a BCRM representative to visit you, simply call Sharon on 0117 323 2100 to arrange a suitable date.

Patients' Page: helping you to choose your treatment

Additional NHS funding secures surprise free treatment cycle for Melinda and Greg



North Bristol couple 'Melinda' (29) and 'Greg' (32)* were delighted to be told that extra NHS money entitled them to a funded IVF/ICSI cycle - just as they were about to pay for forthcoming treatment.

Melinda and Greg started trying for a baby over 2 ½ years ago, but went to their GP in January 2007 when Melinda had still not had a period 12 months after coming off the Pill.

After initial tests, Melinda responded to treatment and ovulation started. Advanced sperm function tests showed Greg had reduced numbers of normally-

formed sperm, a problem that revealed the need for using the ICSI 'sperm injection' technique in combination with IVF. The couple joined the waiting list in April this year.

"As we knew there was a waiting list we decided to fund our own cycle," says Melinda. "It was when we attended our treatment planning appointment that we were informed there was extra funding from the PCTs to clear the waiting list and could therefore now benefit from a funded cycle."

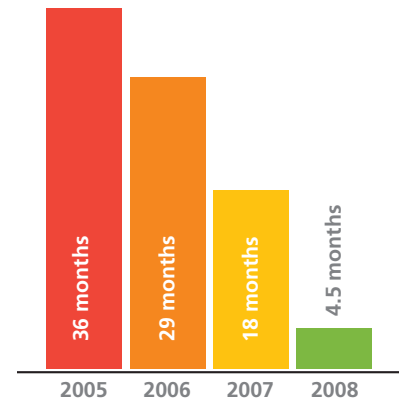
Excellent support

"Although it was tough and confusing in the early stages of diagnosis, at least we now understand where we're going and what we need to do to get there," adds Melinda, whose eggs will be collected in late October. "Having Julie as a named nurse offers us both excellent support. The free NHS treatment is of course very welcome and will be a big help should we need additional cycles to achieve success."

To find out more about how you could benefit from NHS-funded fertility treatment please contact your GP.

* Names have been changed to protect patient anonymity

Going...going...gone! Our NHS waiting list is disappearing fast



NHS fertility treatment waiting times since 2005

The last four years have seen an increased focus on NHS funding for fertility treatment. To meet NICE guidelines and 18 week wait initiatives, local PCTs have been providing more funding to reduce waiting lists. As a result, we've finally been able to reduce the list in this financial year to a maximum 18 weeks from referral, as long as all investigations are complete. We've achieved this as a result of the increased capacity offered by our new building plus significant additional investment from North Bristol NHS Trust.

'Best in the West': confirmed by HFEA results

On July 23rd BCRM had its first HFEA annual inspection since opening which focused on our organisation, service quality, patient information, and our clinical and laboratory processes.

The inspection team was very impressed with the new unit and recommended that our licence be renewed without additional conditions. This was approved by a full Licence Committee of the HFEA in October. The Licence Committee and Inspection report will be available on the HFEA website in the near future.

The HFEA has also recently published pregnancy rates for all licensed clinics for 2007. These show that our pregnancy rate for couples where the woman was aged 35 years or less was 48.2%. This confirms a recent quote from one of our patients that we are 'The Best in the West'.

Julie Hinks is pleased to meet you...

In each issue of Fertility News we'll be profiling key BCRM staff members. This time round we'd like you to meet our Clinical Nurse Manager **Julie Hinks**.

Julie joined the University of Bristol team in 1995 working on research programmes at St Michael's Hospital. During her time at Priory Road, and now at the BCRM, she has worked on egg and sperm donation programmes, NHS and self-funded programmes and has extended her role as a named nurse, performing ultrasound scans, IUI and ET techniques. Julie has managed the nursing team since 2002 and is a member of the BCRM senior



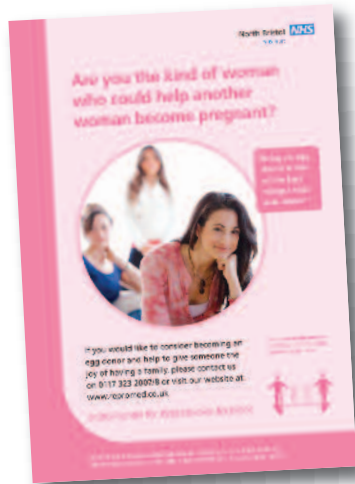
Julie Hinks, Clinical Nurse Manager

management team. She also sits on national fertility nursing committees.

Outside of work she likes walking her dog, wining and dining - and holidays!

Women wanted! BCRM launches Bristol 'Give Life, Give Hope' egg donation campaign

With more than 100 couples in the Bristol area waiting as long as 2½ years for suitable donor eggs, 'Give Life, Give Hope' aims to encourage more women to donate and bring lengthy waiting times down.



"As a couple we faced being childless. Our egg donor has made us a family."

The Jenson family

'Give Life, Give Hope' is a national Department of Health initiative to encourage potential egg donors aged 23-35 to offer their help regardless of background, ethnicity and whether or not they have children. In recognition of the city's 30 years developing infertility treatment, Bristol has been invited to take part as a 'focus city' for the campaign which starts on November 11.

Jane is one local woman on BCRM's egg donation waiting list who has chosen to support the campaign by sharing her and her partner's story. "Donating eggs is a most valuable gift - just the chance to try for a family is amazing," says 38 year-old Jane, who has been trying for a baby for six years. "The campaign aims to help women understand how egg donation can offer genuine hope of becoming a mum for me and many others in my situation."

If you think you could help other women achieve their dream of motherhood by becoming an egg donor please call the nursing team in confidence now on 0117 323 2007.

New-look BCRM website 'a must' for all patients and GPs

An extensive makeover for the BCRM website at www.repromed.co.uk is designed to help patients and GPs find all the information they need on BCRM advice and treatment quickly and easily.

- **Meet the BCRM team**
- **Understand more about the services available**
- **Get answers to frequently asked questions**
- **Share infertility experiences on popular discussion forums**
- **Find out more about costs**

Pay a visit now to www.repromed.co.uk

Dates for your Diary

Patient Information Evenings 2009

6pm to 8pm

Monday January 26th

Tuesday April 21st

Thursday July 23rd

Thursday October 22nd

Email sharon.kavanagh@nhs.nbt.uk or call 0117 323 2025 to make an appointment.

New GP Study Days in 2009

See page 2 for news of GP study days in 2009 - dates TBA - and 'on request' practice presentations by visiting BCRM staff.

Clinical pregnancy rates

Statistics based on treatments between 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2007

Age	Pregnancy rate: combined IVF & ICSI fresh embryo transfers using own eggs					
	Below 35 yrs	35 - 37 yrs	38 - 39 yrs	40 - 42 yrs	43 - 44 yrs	over 44
Per cycle started	48.0% (147/306)	39.7% (85/214)	30.7% (42/137)	20.5% (23/112)	** (1/20)	** (0/2)
Per egg collection	49.5% (147/297)	42.1% (85/202)	32.3% (42/130)	21.9% (23/105)	** (1/15)	** (0/1)
Per embryo transfer	50.0% (147/292)	42.7% (85/199)	33.1% (42/127)	23.0% (23/100)	** (1/15)	** (0/1)

** percentages not calculated when numbers are very small

In our next issue...

We'll be looking at the implications of changes to the HFEA Code of Practice guidelines relating to single embryo transfer. We'll also be exploring the role of complementary treatments such as acupuncture.



If you would like more information on the Centre and its services, please contact Ms Julie Hinks, Clinical Nurse Manager on 0117 323 2009

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