

The Ordinance regulates reproductive technology (RT) procedures and confines the provision of RT procedures to infertile couples with exceptions as stated in the Code of Practice on Reproductive Technology and Embryo Research (COP). One of the exceptions is where the RT procedure is for obtaining gametes. It is stated in Section 10.8 of the COP that gametes can be stored for cancer or other patients who may be rendered infertile as a result of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery or other medical treatment. Electively storing eggs for women who are married and who wish to preserve their fertility because of aging was not considered by the Council on Human Reproduction Technology (the Council on HRT) at the time when the COP was first published in 2007, because the technique of egg freezing was considered experimental then. With the recent advancement in the technology, there are growing clinical data showing good pregnancy rate from these frozen eggs, so much so that in October 2012, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) in the USA lifted the former experimental treatment title for egg freezing and announced that this is now a first line fertility treatment option. The Council on HRT did not have enough time to address this issue when it published the revised COP in January 2013.

Obtaining gametes (eggs in this case) is definitely an RT procedure. The provision of this RT procedure to a single woman to preserve her fertility should be governed by the Ordinance and the COP. Given that this issue has never been considered when the Ordinance and the COP was written, is it legal to obtain and freeze eggs for single women to prevent age-related infertility in the future? If this is legal, should the Ordinance or the COP be revised to include this as a justified indication for women to store their eggs? The call for a decision has been rising as the public are aware of the

advancement in the technology and the request for this treatment is increasing. A timely review will be most welcome by the public and the medical profession concerned.