

# International Federation of Fertility Societies

## Global Standards of Infertility Care

### Standard 2.

#### Access to infertility care Recommendations for Practice

Name	Access to infertility care, recommendations for practice
Version number	2.0/IFFS/Standards
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#### **Introduction:**

The goal of IFFS Guidelines are to provide policy- and decision-makers and the clinical and scientific community with a set of recommendations that can be used as a basis for developing or revising institutional or national guidelines on selected practice recommendations for infertility practice.

The document addresses minimal standards of practice but does not provide rigid guidelines but rather gives recommendations that provide the basis for rationalizing the provision of infertility services in view of the most up-to-date information available.

Because country situations and programme environments vary so greatly, it is inappropriate to set firm international guidelines on infertility practice. However, it is expected that institutional and national programmes will use these guidance documents for updating or developing their own infertility guidelines in the light of their national health policies, needs, priorities and resources. The intent is to help improve access to, quality of, and safety of infertility and assisted conception services. These improvements must be made within the context of users' informed choice and

medical safety. Adaptation is not always an easy task and is best done by those well-acquainted with prevailing health conditions, behaviours, and cultures.

**Rationale:**

Infertility affects some 168 million people worldwide and has no boundaries of race, standard of living or social status. In many developing countries no formal structure exists for the recognition or investigation of infertility despite the huge social stigma that this causes both men and women<sup>1</sup>. Both the United Nations<sup>2</sup> and the Council of Europe<sup>3</sup> have declared the right of couples to establish a family and be provided with medical support to do so<sup>4</sup>.

**Recommendation for practice:**

*All men and women who are having difficulty in conceiving should be seen by a health care professional who can provide them with pre conceptual advice and, if appropriate, arrange investigations to establish a diagnosis, irrespective of race, social background or financial status.*

**Implementation:** Recommendation for Practice 2.0 will be circulated in the following ways:

1. Publication in the IFFS newsletter
2. Inclusion in the IFFS World Assisted Conception Survey
3. Circulation to all member countries secretaries
4. Request to WHO and FIGO for inclusion in relevant publications

## References:

1. World Health Organisation. Assisted Reproduction in developing countries – facing up to the issues. Progress in Reproductive Health Research. 2003; No 63
2. General Assembly, United Nations. Article 16 and 25, Universal Declaration on Human Rights. United Nations, New York. 1948 <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>
3. Council of Europe. Article 12. Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Rome, 1950 <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/005.htm>
4. Council of Europe. Article 11. European Social Charter. Council of Europe, Turin. 1961, revised 1996. <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=035&CM=8&DF=07/11/2005&CL=ENG>