



Department
of Health &
Social Care

From Maria Caulfield MP
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The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
By email to: george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk

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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 19 January to Sajid Javid on behalf of a number of your constituents, about in vitro fertilisation (IVF).

I understand your constituents' concerns, and I am grateful to them for taking the time to raise this matter with you. This is an important issue for the department.

Decisions about health services in England are made by independent local commissioners, based on the clinical needs of their population. The Government has made it clear that commissioners should commission fertility services in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, to allow equal access to fertility treatments across England.

It has become clear, however, that the NICE provisions for same-sex couples require further consideration. The Department of Health and Social Care has therefore agreed with NICE that it should review the fertility guidelines, and NICE has now started to establish the scope of the review. The review will consider the current access criteria for same-sex couples.

We are also considering other ways to address problems with access for same-sex couples, as part of a broader approach to accessing fertility services for all. We intend to outline our initial ambitions in the Women's Health Strategy, which we aim to publish in the spring.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

MARIA CAULFIELD