

IRISH ENQUIRIES FOR OVERSEAS FERTILITY TREATMENTS UP 59% IN SIX MONTHS

- Enquiries for IVF in Czech Republic up a staggering 463%, while egg donation almost doubles (188%) in past year
- Spain sees enquiries from Ireland more than tripling (238%) for IVF
- Fertility consultations in Czech Republic quadruple (350%)
- However, IVF enquiries in Ireland down by more than a fifth (21%)

Sunday 3 August 2014 – Enquiries from Irish patients for overseas fertility treatments have increased by 59% in the past six months alone, according to new research from private healthcare search engine, WhatClinic.com.

The Czech Republic has seen a whopping 463% increase in IVF enquiries from Ireland in the past 12 months, while enquiries for the same treatment in Spain have more than doubled (238%). Enquiries at home have dropped by more than a fifth (21%) in the past year, as patients look overseas for cheaper appointments and treatments.

One round of IVF in Ireland costs an average of €4,662, but in the Czech Republic patients will pay €2,651. With most couples needing several attempts, these costs can soon mount up. Although average costs for Spanish IVF are higher at €4,800, the increase in demand could be largely down to the wider choices available there, with many more clinics and more treatment options.

Egg donation enquiries to the Czech Republic nearly tripled (188%) in the past 12 months, while enquiries in Ireland fell by almost half (47%). In Ireland, this treatment costs an average of €5,537, where as in the Czech Republic it costs €4,877. Despite Spain commanding the highest price at €6,317, enquiries have risen by more than a third (35%) in the past year.

Egg donation is most commonly used when a woman is unable to produce her own eggs, often when the ovary's store of follicles has started to run out. This can either be done through a donation from a friend or relative, or through an unknown donor at an 'egg bank'.

Fertility consultation enquiries have more than quadrupled (350%) in the past year in the Czech Republic, but have only seen a marginal drop (-1%) in Ireland. Belgium and Greece, which received no enquiries in 2013, are now beginning to see more Irish patients looking to them for these consultations.

One of the less common treatments, embryo donation, has seen the biggest growth of enquiries in Spain, up 700% in the past year. Spain is the cheapest option with one treatment costing an average of €2,500, compared to Czech Republic (€3,225), Ireland (€3,500) and Greece (€3,500). The process involves a spare fertilized embryo of a couple's successful IVF treatment being given to another woman unable to conceive.

Despite the fall in most fertility treatments in Ireland, fertility tests remain popular with enquiries almost up by a half (47%) in the past year, while sperm assessments increase by 52% in the same period.

Caelen King, CEO of WhatClinic.com, comments: "There has been a significant lean towards travelling overseas for fertility treatments in the past year, as many more couples look at their options outside of Ireland.

"In some cases cost may play a big factor in this decision, but often patients are travelling to countries for specific clinics that have increased expertise or treatments that are not available here.

"Fertility treatment, such as IVF, can be a long and difficult process so it's incredibly important to choose a clinic you're comfortable with. Carefully consider all of your treatment options before you commit, but also make sure you find somewhere that

can give you the support you need throughout your journey. Be aware that you may need repeat attempts, as well as transportation and accommodation overseas, which can ramp costs into the tens of thousands of Euros.”

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About WhatClinic.com

WhatClinic.com is a clinic comparison site that lists over 100,000 clinics globally. In 2013 15.7 million people visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective, self-pay medical treatments. WhatClinic.com’s mission is to give the patient, as an empowered consumer, access to all the information they need to make an informed choice, including price, availability and reviews. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King, and is in operation in over 127 countries.