

September 13, 2016

Legislative Commission on Surrogacy

Dear Commission Members,

I am writing today on behalf of the Center for Reproductive Medicine on the business practices of fertility clinics. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend in person as patients are scheduled months in advance.

My name is Dr. Colleen Casey and I am a physician at the Center for Reproductive Medicine Fertility Clinic. We have been serving patients diagnosed with infertility in Minnesota since 1986. I have been with the practice since 2011.

Infertility is far more common than most people realize. An estimated 12% of women in America are diagnosed with infertility. This translates to nearly 700,000 women in Minnesota. Like any other specialty clinic, we treat patients from Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. Our patients find us at the referral of their personal physician, other medical professionals or through their own networks of friends and family who may be familiar with our services. We also receive inquiries from patients who find us through searches on the Internet.

Also like any other specialty clinic, our facility and staff are subject to significant state and federal regulation. Our physicians are licensed by the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice and must maintain their license in good standing to practice medicine in Minnesota. Similarly, our nursing staff is licensed by the Minnesota Board of Nursing and subject to its oversight.

Our laboratory and its staff are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which oversees over 250,000 labs nationwide under the Clinical Lab Improvement Amendments (CLIA), a federal law passed several decades ago to assure the public can be assured of quality laboratory services. The IVF and clinical laboratories are accredited by the College of American Pathologists (CAP).

Clinic pregnancy outcomes are reported to the Centers for Disease Control and the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology (SART). SART is the primary organization of professionals dedicated to the practice of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) in the United States.

Finally, unlike many other specialty clinics, our services may not be covered by the health insurance of our patients. Some self-insured companies may provide fertility benefits while many do not. Many of our patients have no health insurance benefits for our services and must pay out-of-pocket for the care they receive.

In conclusion, our clinic operates as any other specialty medical clinic serving patients in Minnesota. Our staff and our clinic are subject to state and federal regulation and inspection as well as being subject to the standards set by national professional organizations.

Again, I apologize for not being able to present this information in person. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colleen Casey', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Colleen Casey, MD

Center for Reproductive Medicine

Minneapolis, MN