

DISABLED PEOPLE MUST BE CONSULTED IN FERTILITY LAW REFORM

RADAR, the UK's leading pan-disability campaigning organisation is calling for the consultation on fertility and embryology law reform to engage with disabled people.

RADAR has welcomed the plans of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to seek public views on fertility and embryology law to inform proposals to allow greater screening for genetic diseases. RADAR is committed to ensuring that disabled people are involved in the consultation.

RADAR is mindful that the barriers facing disabled people confront parents dealing with the prospect of having a disabled child. Parents, whether disabled themselves, or with a disabled child, know about these barriers, and must have a clear, strong voice in the debate.

RADAR believes that all those involved in the consultation must recognise that embryo screening is not a solution to the real problems of discrimination.

While RADAR respects the choices of individuals and believes that the right to reproductive freedom for all is fundamental, changes to the law to allow for greater screening for more impairments and diseases will not help disabled people to be fully included in society and treated as equal citizens.

Kate Nash, Chief Executive of RADAR, said today,

“Disabled people must be involved in the discussion. Exploring their unique experiences will add real value to the reform process.”

“RADAR urges HFEA and the Government to be sensitive to the reality that until discrimination is effectively tackled, new reproductive technologies will look to many disabled people like an attempt to portray them as a problem that can be wished away, rather than as people whose difference should be celebrated.”

Notes for editors:

¹ RADAR is a national non-governmental disability organisation working for the rights of disabled people, from the broadest range of cultural, racial and social backgrounds, irrespective of their impairment. Although RADAR works with organisations of all types (of and for disabled people) RADAR itself is an organisation of disabled people.

² RADAR's vision is about pushing out the boundaries of the expected; a vision of a world where human difference is routinely anticipated, expertly accommodated and positively celebrated.

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