The National Embryo Donation Center (NEDC) is a non-profit organization that was established in 2002 in Knoxville, Tennessee. The organization is endorsed and supported by several Christian-based associations such as the Christian Medical Association, Bethany Christian Services, and Baptist Health Systems. Its goal is to provide embryo donation and embryo adoption services in order to utilize the large number of embryos that are being cryopreserved as a result of infertility procedures and are no longer needed. Jeffrey Keenan, Medical Director of the NEDC, is an OB/GYN, reproductive endocrinologist, and infertility specialist.

The NEDC is associated with the Southeastern Fertility Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. Development of the NEDC was planned to encompass the ideals of traditional adoption and the medical knowledge of infertility. The beliefs of the NEDC are that every embryo should have the opportunity or chance of life. The organization also educates the public about the options of embryo donation and adoption. In order to accomplish this goal, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has provided federal grant money to NEDC. A portion of the equipment and technology that is used at the center is received through donations. The hope of the entire center is to make embryo donation and adoption well-known options both to individuals deciding what to do with their excess embryos that are cryopreserved, and to those still struggling with fertility issues.

Several people from different backgrounds comprise the team at the NEDC. The staff positions are embryologist, grant manager, PR and marketing manager, researcher, research assistant/librarian, patient coordinator, and administrative assistant. The medical director and name most often linked to this organization is Jeffrey Keenan. There is also a board of directors that ensures the NEDC follows and is up to date with all legal, medical, and social issues.

The NEDC website (www.embryodonation.org) explains embryo donation and adoption in detail while providing a variety of information to potential donors or adopters. The application form to apply to the NEDC program is also available on-line along with the release of medical information, informed consent, and relinquishment forms. These files are available through the website so they can be printed and taken to a clinic in order to proceed with the process of embryo donation or embryo adoption.

The donated embryos that the organization receives are unused embryos that have been cryopreserved in fertility clinics. The NEDC allows individuals who donate their excess embryos to choose from various levels of contact with the prospective adopting couple, ranging from anonymous to completely open, meaning full communication. The organization also permits donors to specify the characteristics they prefer in an individual(s) receiving their
donated embryo(s). Lastly, donors must undergo medical screening and a series of genetic
tests before being cleared as eligible to donate through the program. There are also
requirements that the individual receiving the embryo must meet. For example, the woman
receiving the embryo must be married. Home reviews, background screening, and counseling
are all part of the embryo adoption [8] process.

The public has become more aware of embryo adoption [8] since the Bush administration
made statements supporting the practice. Former President George W. Bush [14] specifically
spoke about the Snowflakes program, which is a part of Nightlight Christian Adoptions [15]
(NCA). This organization [9] played a major role in motivating the creation of NEDC. Although
both the NEDC and Snowflakes both support and provide the service of embryo adoption [8],
their approaches to the process differ in some ways. For example, the NEDC allows the
donation and adoption process to be either anonymous or open while the NCA requires at
least some form of communication between donor(s) and adopter(s).

Embryo donation and adoption programs like NEDC aid in the success rate of the match
process involved in embryo adoption [8]. The NEDC has set up a research program, chaired by
Dr. Reg Finger, in order to gain more knowledge and insight on embryo donation [7] and
adoption. In order for these resources to be available to the public, the NEDC has created a
website (www.embryoconnection.org [16]) for this purpose. The center is still only in its
beginning stages, but the NEDC hopes that the number of embryo transfers will grow as
individuals become increasingly aware of this option.

Sources

Embryo Adoption Agency: A Thought Experiment [17].” In The Ethics of Embryo Adoption
and the Catholic Tradition: Moral Arguments, Economic Reality and Social Analysis,
eds. Sarah-Vaughan Brakman and Darlene Fozard Weaver, 251?273. New York:
2. Keenan, Jeffrey. “Development of the National Embryo Donation Center [4].” In
The Ethics of Embryo Adoption and the Catholic Tradition: Moral Arguments, Economic
Reality and Social Analysis, eds. Sarah-Vaughan Brakman and Darlene Fozard Weaver,
3. National Embryo Donation Center [4]. “About the National Embryo Donation Center [4].”
National Embryo Donation Center [4]. http://www.embryodonation.org/about.html [18]
(Accessed April 30, 2009).
4. Weaver, Darlene Fozard. “Embryo Adoption Theologically Considered: Bodies,
Adoption, and the Common Good.” In The Ethics of Embryo Adoption and the Catholic
Tradition: Moral Arguments, Economic Reality and Social Analysis, eds. Sarah-Vaughan
Brakman and Darlene Fozard Weaver, 141?159. New York: Springer Science +

The National Embryo Donation Center (NEDC) is a non-profit organization that was
established in 2002 in Knoxville, Tennessee. The organization is endorsed and supported by
several Christian-based associations such as the Christian Medical Association, Bethany
Christian Services, and Baptist Health Systems. Its goal is to provide embryo donation and
embryo adoption services in order to utilize the large number of embryos that are being
cryopreserved as a result of infertility procedures and are no longer needed. Jeffrey Keenan, Medical Director of the NEDC, is an OB/GYN, reproductive endocrinologist, and infertility specialist.

Subject
Fertility [19]

Topic

Publisher
Arizona State University. School of Life Sciences. Center for Biology and Society. Embryo Project Encyclopedia.

Rights
© Arizona Board of Regents Licensed as Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0) http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/

Format
Articles [22]

Last Modified
Wednesday, July 4, 2018 - 04:40

DC Date Accessioned
Thursday, May 10, 2012 - 14:04

DC Date Available
Thursday, May 10, 2012 - 14:04

DC Date Created
2010-06-24

DC Date Created Standard
Thursday, June 24, 2010 - 07:00

Contact Us