



Move towards global consensus guidelines on surrogacy with mounting concerns over human rights violations

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BEIJING: World leaders in assisted reproductive technology are finalising global consensus guidelines on minimal standards in surrogacy to address mounting concerns about severe human rights violations.

The standards will attempt to tackle inconsistent or inadequate regulation of the practice, particularly in settings where there is disempowerment of women and girls including violence, abuse and exploitation of surrogates.

It is a move being propelled by a global collaboration between the Asia Pacific Initiative on Reproduction (ASPIRE), the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE), the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), and the International Federation of Fertility Societies (IFFS).

It was spearheaded by ASPIRE and during discussions between the global consensus group the United Nations (UN) issued a report calling for its 193 member States to move towards eradicating surrogacy in all its forms. The report, presented at the UN General Assembly in October 2025, said the member States should adopt a legal and policy framework for surrogacy pending its abolition.

The first draft consensus guidelines on surrogacy developed by representatives of the peak fertility societies will be presented for the first time at the ASPIRE 2026 Congress in Beijing this week, a meeting that will be attended by around 3,000 fertility specialists from across the world.

Australian fertility specialist, Dr Clare Boothroyd, the Immediate Past President of ASPIRE and Scientific Director of the Beijing Congress, will outline key guideline statements that will then progress to consultation among members of all the participating societies before adoption. She said the guidelines would address issues including:

- awareness and avoidance of human trafficking;
- the welfare of children born as a result of surrogacy;
- conditions regarding consent and support for surrogates, including their physical and psychosocial welfare; and
- the physical and psychological status of intending parents and their capacity to raise children resulting from surrogacy into adulthood.

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“These are truly landmark guidelines applying to surrogates, surrogacy agencies, commissioning parents and medical experts, and they will provide guidance for policy makers,” Dr Boothroyd said.

“The three global societies – ASPIRE, ESHRE and IFFS – and the large national society, ASRM, will all have input to the final document. As such, it is a unique document that will represent an international consensus of the professionals involved in surrogacy.”

The guidelines on surrogacy will be among a range of compelling issues to be addressed at the ASPIRE Congress at the China National Convention Centre in Beijing from 7 to 10 May.

The program, featuring outstanding speakers in the field of assisted reproductive technology, will cover topics including:

- advances in understanding of the human microbiome and new frontiers in genetics relating to fertility;
- plummeting total fertility rates around the world;
- access, equity and affordability of assisted reproductive medicine;
- cultural and religious factors in assisted reproduction;
- artificial intelligence in the IVF laboratory;
- psychosocial impacts of infertility;
- fertility preservation in young cancer patients;
- social media influences on fertility awareness; and
- lifestyle factors affecting fertility health.

Further information on the ASPIRE Congress, go to <https://www.aspire2026.com>

INTERVIEW:

Dr Clare Boothroyd is available for interview. To arrange, please contact Trevor Gill, ASPIRE Congress Media Relations Tel: (Australia) 61 418 821948 or email lighthousepr@adelaide.on.net