



Bath
Fertility
Centre

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History

Bath Fertility Centre was formed from the Bath Assisted Conception Clinic – a joint venture between the Royal United Hospital (RUH) and Bath Clinic in 1994. The Clinic was the first venture of its kind, with the RUH being the first District General Hospital in the UK to open its own IVF clinic.

In 1994 the Bath Assisted Conception Clinic was formed as a dedicated centre of excellence, becoming the Bath Fertility Centre in 2005. In order to create a purpose-built clinic, Bath Fertility Centre moved to a brand new site within the Bath Business Park at Peasedown St John near Bath in 2013.

Founder and fertility specialist Nick Sharp along with his colleague David Walker, designed the centre with the help of experts in order to create a future-proof building in which to house all the necessary advanced technology, high tech laboratories, comfortable patient areas and storage facilities.

Today, as one of the UK's most successful fertility clinics, Bath Fertility Centre employs 30 members of staff and welcomes over 2,500 patients through its doors each year.



The Clinic



The state-of-the-art centre just outside of Bath was carefully designed by a team of experts.

Everything from the reception area to the consulting and treatment rooms are designed to provide the highest level of care in a relaxed, comfortable and welcoming stress-free environment.

All fertility procedures are carried out within the centre which offers a peaceful, private and confidential setting.

In addition Bath Fertility Centre has a satellite clinic in central Bristol. The Bristol IVF Centre is located at 58 Queen Square, responding to increasing demand from patients in the Bristol area.

The Team



Nick Sharp

Senior Medical Director

Nick Sharp, Senior Medical Director, has been a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist in Bath since 1989 when he started the Reproductive Medicine Clinic. He then founded Bath Fertility Centre (formerly Bath Assisted Conception Clinic) in 1994.

Nick undertook his training in IVF during a year's sabbatical, as honorary visiting consultant at the Reproductive Medicine Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Adelaide, South Australia. In addition to acquiring the techniques of assisted reproduction, he was responsible for establishing the donor oocyte program in South Australia and the Northern Territory.

He has been Medical Director and Person Responsible since the centre opened in 1994, and has seen it grow from a small unit doing 50 cycles of IVF in the first year, to a centre of excellence undertaking well over 400 cycles of IVF and ICSI (Intra-cytoplasmic Sperm Injection) per year as well as many other types of treatment.



David Walker

Medical Director

David Walker, Medical Director, has been a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist in Bath since 1996.

He qualified in Birmingham in 1985, and obtained a Doctorate of Medicine from Warwick University during a two-year research post in

Reproductive Medicine at Coventry. He has published many papers on embryo and blastocyst culture and established a service for men with obstructive azoospermia.

He retains a keen interest in obstetrics, following the successful outcomes of treatments. David is Clinical Director of Gynaecology at the Bath Royal United Hospital and Chair of the Surgical Division.

The Team



Helen Kendrew
Matron

Helen Kendrew joined the centre in 1997. Helen has been an inspector for the

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) since 2003, and was Honorary Treasurer of the British Fertility Society for 5 years.

She was a member of the independent expert group set up by the HFEA to advise on strategies to reduce multiple births, and remains on the Editorial Board of the One at a Time website, which highlights the risks associated with multiple births.

In June 2014, Helen became Chair of the Paramedical Group for the European Society of Human Reproduction & Embryology. Helen leads a team of nurses that pride themselves on remaining friendly and approachable whilst providing a professional and efficient service.



Kate Kerr
GP Specialist

Dr Kate Kerr MBBS BSc Psychology MRCGP DFFP DRCOG is a GP with Special Interest in Sexual and Reproductive Health. She qualified from University College London in 1998 and initially worked as a GP for 10 years. She joined Bath Fertility Centre in 2008. She has also done extra training in Psychosexual Medicine. Kate also works at Bath's Royal United Hospital in the Sexual Health Clinic.



Stephanie Gadd
Consultant Embryologist

Stephanie Gadd leads the embryology team and has worked at the centre since its inception in 1994. She trained and completed her PhD in Reproductive Endocrinology in Southampton. Stephanie is one of the founder members of the Association of Clinical Embryologists (ACE) and sits on its Training Committee as an external assessor for trainee embryologists across the country. She is also an External Advisor for the HFEA and a Panel Member for the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC), the body which administers registration for practising embryologists in the UK. Stephanie is responsible for introducing innovative techniques into the laboratory and ensures quality management throughout the clinic.

Services

Bath Fertility Centre offers the latest techniques and procedures, all of which increase the chances of successful fertility treatment. For some people, IVF and fertility treatment are synonymous. In reality there are many different types of treatments on offer. The following advanced techniques are available at Bath Fertility Centre:

Time Lapse Monitoring

Using special cameras, housed within incubators, photos are taken every 10 minutes allowing the timings and development patterns of embryo growth to be watched over the entire duration of embryo development. This allows us to select the embryos with the highest implantation potential for transfer.

Blastocyst Transfer

Blastocyst transfer is where the embryos are allowed to develop to 5 – 6 days old at which point they become a Blastocyst and are transferred back into the uterus. Culture of embryos to the Blastocyst stage is very exacting, but Bath Fertility Centre has the laboratory conditions to achieve this. The aim is to achieve Blastocyst stage where possible to increase the chance of a successful implantation.



Services



Laser Assisted Hatching

Embryo(s) need to hatch out of their protective membrane when they reach the Blastocyst stage at 5 – 6 days old. Assisted hatching is a laboratory technique where a small gap is made in the soft membrane of an embryo shortly before embryo transfer.

Endometrial Scratching

A simple procedure that takes place approximately 7 – 14 days before the start of your IVF treatment. The endometrium (lining of the uterus) is gently “scratched”. Studies show that it changes the way the endometrial lining grows back thereby helping embryos implant.

Vitrification

The latest in freezing techniques which results in excellent survival rates of both eggs and embryos, and high pregnancy rates with frozen embryos.

Services

Embryo Grading

Embryo grading allows us to choose the embryos with the greatest potential to become a normal pregnancy. This is done by grading the embryos on their appearance.

Sperm DNA Testing

This test provides a measure of the DNA fragility index inside the sperm. If the DNA integrity is found to be reduced this can lead to a decrease in fertility and the risk of spontaneous miscarriage is increased. However, additional measures can be utilised to help overcome this factor.

Surgical Sperm Retrieval

An advanced technique that allows us to surgically retrieve sperm. This is used when there is no sperm in the ejaculate due to blockage due to vasectomy or other reasons or if there are insufficient sperm in the ejaculate. It can also be used when there are ejaculation problems.



Case Studies

Parents

Laura and Gary Hooper

Ages

30 and 33

Type of Treatment

IVF

Year

2015/16



Laura and Gary Hooper were first referred to us via the NHS in October 2010. Prior to their referral the couple had been trying to conceive for over a year without success.

Laura was aware of her fertility issues having been tested during her treatment for Cushing's disease – a collection of symptoms caused by high levels of a hormone called cortisol in the body – in 2008. She also had Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.

Following their referral, the couple were funded by the NHS for three courses of intrauterine insemination (IUI) which were unsuccessful. NHS funded in vitro fertilisation (IVF) was not available to them at this time due to Laura being overweight and the couple not living together.

Following a break from treatment, during which Laura lost weight and the couple got married and moved in together, they returned to their GP in the hope of being referred back to the Bath Fertility Centre for further treatment.

In August 2015, having now met the criteria for IVF funding, the couple began their first cycle of treatment. Out of a total of 16 embryos five were successful, with four being frozen at blastocyst stage. The fifth one was transferred at day six, and two weeks later Laura and Gary had a positive pregnancy test.

A year later the couple now have a beautiful three month old baby boy named Brennan.

“He is our little miracle and we are overjoyed. Thank you so much to the Bath Fertility Centre for making our dream come true. It took us six years to conceive and it has been an emotional journey but we didn't want to give up.” – Laura Hooper



Case Studies

Parents

Louisa and Andrew Langley

Ages

33 and 38

Type of Treatment

Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection

Year

2015/16

Louisa and Andrew were referred to Bath Fertility Centre by their GP in December 2013. Their referral came following the discoveries that Andrew had a low sperm count and Louisa was suffering from Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).

PCOS is a condition affecting approximately one in every three women which can lead to difficulties when trying to conceive. It is characterised by unbalanced levels of Estrogen and Progesterone which leads to the growth of ovarian cysts.

The couple undertook two cycles of Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) in February and April 2014 at Bath Fertility Centre. The treatment involves the injection of a healthy sperm directly into the egg. Unfortunately both cycles were unsuccessful. The couple had one embryo remaining which was frozen for use at a later date. A few months later Louisa started on medication for frozen embryo transfer but the process came to a halt when she fractured her ankle the day before the procedure. Another six months on, and with a fully healed ankle, Louisa began the process again.

In January 2016 we were all delighted when the process worked. Lily Cerys Langley was welcomed into the world four years after Louisa and Andrew's journey began.

“The compassion and service we received was absolutely excellent. The care, treatment and friendliness of everyone at the Bath Fertility Centre is exemplary; we owe them a huge debt in helping us complete our little family.” – Louisa Langley



Statistics

Patients Per Year

 = 100 Patients



Bath Fertility Centre
(Over 1,000)

50% of which are
NHS Referrals

**NHS Reproductive
Medicine Clinic***
(Over 1,500)

*The NHS Reproductive
Medicine Clinic is housed
with the Bath Fertility
Centre

IVF Success Rates

Fresh Cycles	Frozen Embryo Transfer
Under 35 46.5%	Under 35 34.9%
35 – 37 29.5%	35 – 37 32.7%
38 – 39 24.5%	38 – 39 28.6%
40 – 42 8.3%	40 – 42 26.1%

Average Age



Ethics



According to the Human Fertilisation and Embryo Authority, one in six couples in the UK are affected by fertility problems.

Bath Fertility Centre takes an ethical, honest and straightforward approach when offering advice, being sure not to engender false hope or expectation and carefully considering patients on a case by case basis. With a proven track record of over 25 years in the field, Nick Sharp, Senior Medical Director and Founder of Bath Fertility Centre says treatment and advice must be based on scientific study and presented from a strong ethical standpoint.

“It is important for those of us providing fertility services to be clear and transparent about the expectations of a *pregnancy-from-treatment* for those seeking help. Honesty is an integral part of our approach at our specialist fertility unit in Bath. We always advise patients of their chances at the initial consultation, and try to dissuade women aged 44 years and over against even trying due to the very slender chances of success, unless donor eggs are considered.”

“Similarly there are situations in which we would decline to provide treatment, for example a ‘double-donor’ scenario which would require the donation of both sperm and egg from third parties thereby creating an embryo with no biological link to the patient(s).”

“Where possible we will seek to offer the very best advice, support and treatment for couples and individuals wishing to have a baby.”

[See Case Studies for more information](#)

Media and Contacts

Nick Sharp and the team at Bath Fertility Centre are available to comment on a range of issues related to fertility treatment.

A selection of case studies and images are available on request.

For more information please contact us using the details below.

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