**Interesting information received from cold calling a few of the largest US sperm banks.**

**In addition to reading this, what the sperm banks say, you must read the user comments on the DSR’s “Which Sperm Bank” page, where each sperm bank has it’s own page of user comments. We are seeing a discrepancy between what some of the sperm banks are telling potential clients, and what many families have found to be true**.

**California Cryobank:**

1. What is the cost to store sperm for a year? $475/year or free if you store 5+ vials.
2. How long do you store sperm for? Indefinitely/as long as you pay.
3. What is the greatest distance between half-siblings that you know of? Unknown.
4. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? 25 family units.
5. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? 25 Family Units. {Note from Wendy: how can they claim to limit or track births when there is no accurate record keeping and reporting is not mandatory? They didn’t know about my son, and have incomplete records on our donor}.
6. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Yes, we ship to over 44 countries.
7. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Stay in touch with donor every 5 years to update medical, contact, SSN info. {Note from Wendy: we have heard from CCB donors saying that this has never happened. More than one recipient reports this type of information: “When I called them back in November of 2013 I asked that specific question and they told me they don't contact/update the medical information with the donor unless the donor reports to CCB a problem”. Another family reports, “I called them many times for their 5 years update and they only gave me one that they received in 2007 because I called… since then nothing and they say that they sent another one to the donor but that he told them he was too busy to filled up their small 3 pages questionnaires.  And that is that!  And they have nothing else to say. Many families from our group called them and got the same answer. “
8. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? Only if pertinent. {Note from Wendy: from a recipient family: “My son's donor found out he had a blood clotting disorder after a child was born with a severe version of it. CCB contacted some of the other mothers in my group but I didn't hear from them and had to call them personally even though they have all my updated information.”}
9. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? No.
10. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Bank will call donor to ask type of contact desired- in person, letter, email, or phone call. {Note from Wendy: This is quite different from the process explained to me by CCB: that they send a snail mail letter asking the donor to “update his profile”, with no mention of an 18 year old wishing contact (for privacy reasons). Many donors might think, “I have no information to update”, throw away the letter, never knowing that there was an 18-year-old donor offspring wishing to make contact.}
11. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? And: How will you be notified if a donor reports a medical or genetic issue? The answer for both questions was: We will contact the families. {Note from Wendy: the problem is, that they probably don’t know who all of the families are. The case of Johnson v. California Cryobank illustrates this: how many families (hundreds of vials were soled) have children out there who have not yet been diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease? If my son’s donor came down with a serious disease, they would have no idea how to reach all the families with children born from his donations.}

**The Sperm Bank of California**

1. How long do you store sperm for? No limit, as long as you pay.
2. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? 10 family limit.
3. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? First rep: unknown. Another rep: Can’t release that information.
4. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Anywhere not restricted.
5. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Check in frequently with donors for med updates and to confirm contact info.
6. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? Does not recommend DSR. {Note from Wendy: This is the only sperm bank that the DSR recommends.}
7. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Child contacts facility and facility then contacts donor/reviews donor contact preference.
8. If an "open" donor is purchased, can that donor change to an "anonymous" donor? Can't switch open to closed - can switch from closed to open.
9. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Ask them upon applying; do not accept if they have donated elsewhere. {Note from Wendy: we do know of cases where their donors have donated at multiple clinics.}

**Fairfax Cryobank:**

1. What is the cost to store the sperm for a year? $40/month; if you buy 4-7 vials, you get 3 months free storage; buy 8+ vials, get 2 years free storage
2. How long do you store sperm for? Indefinitely, as long as you pay.
3. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? One Fairfax rep said that there is not a full reporting, and they “are not sure”. Another said that they do not release this information except to patients who want the same donor. {Note from Wendy: we know of at least two groups of children born from the same Fairfax donor on the DSR with half siblings more than 20 years apart in age.}
4. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? There is a cap at 25 families. {Note from Wendy: Fairfax is one of the sperm banks with the most very large groups of half siblings, including the largest group that we know of, somewhere between 160-200 that was featured in a NY Times cover story in September of 2011. Several of the mothers in this group say that they called into Fairfax as the group was at 50, 75 and 100+, asking them to please stop selling the sperm, as their group was too large. Fairfax denies ever receiving such calls or knowing about the size of this group (in person conversation between me and the director). }
5. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? One rep said that the Information can be looked up via donor number, but they can only tell the number of pregnancies and another said that they do not release this information except to patients who want the same donor. {Note from Wendy: See my last comment. They have no idea.}
6. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic? Indefinitely, moved to electronic filing system in 2010 (files on record '71 - present).
7. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Yes, many.
8. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Since 2009, yearly updates, before than it’s unknown.
9. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? One rep said: Yes, only on the online donor profile. Another rep said: Clinic emails doctors and patients; also update donor record on website; and update donor medical status page on site; and post in bank's family forums.
10. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? No.
11. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Both child and donor must be “registered”. Bank contacts donors to ask their preferred method of contact; if donor has no preference, bank releases all contact info to kid.
12. If an "open" donor is purchased, can that donor change to an "anonymous" donor? Unlike other banks, an open donor at Fairfax cannot become anonymous. Open donors stay open.
13. Are both recipients and donors given the same donor ID's? Not to donor directly. Starting in January 2012, we allow donors to know numbers because after that date, clients were informed that donor numbers would be provided to donors. Prior to that date, we are still unable to provide donor numbers because clients were told that donors were not provided donor numbers. We must respect all parties involved in the process and follow the procedures that were outlined to the parties at the time they engaged in the process. 2. Our policy has changed as a result of previous requests from patients and donors alike. New donors are given the option of knowing their donor number. Clients purchasing donor sperm from donors who entered the program previously purchased with the understanding that donors did not have access to their donor numbers and accordingly old donor numbers are not released. It is important to consider and respect each donor and all recipients who use donor sperm. Another DSR donor was told: “*they DO NOT give out donor numbers- she mentioned that donors who began in the past 12 months are told, but not those who were covered by their previous privacy policy.”*
14. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Yes, asked frequently. Turned away if so. {Note from Wendy: See the Style Network documentary “Sperm Donor”.}

**New England Cryogenic (NECC)**

1. What is the cost for a vial of sperm: Between $480-705.
2. How long do you store sperm for? One rep: Proven up to 29 years. Another Rep: As long as you pay.
3. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? We don’t have that information.
4. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? Ten families.
5. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? One rep: Not sure. Another rep: We can’t release that information.
6. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic? One rep: 25 years, both types of records. Another rep: Keep records forever on donors.
7. Do you ship sperm to other countries? One rep: Depends on country regulations. Another rep: No.
8. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Once donor leaves program, there are no legal ties. Donor can update bank.
9. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? One rep: Will mail a letter to families who purchased. Another rep: Only if deemed necessary. Letters sent to both doctor and individual.
10. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? One rep: They are agnostic about the DSR, although some of their families have connected. Another rep: Information given, but do not recommend.
11. What are the proportions of open v anonymous donors in your catalog: One rep: about half and half. Another rep: open 20% and anonymous 80%.
12. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. One rep: Bank makes contact and then its up to the donor. Another rep: Will release contact information to the child.
13. If an "open" donor is purchased, can that donor change to an "anonymous" donor? One rep: No, we push anonymity. Another rep: Can’t change to anonymous after signing a contract.
14. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? Will they only contact your doctor? You directly? One rep: Bank will send letter to purchaser. Another rep: Only if deemed necessary, letters sent to doctor and individual.
15. Are both recipients and donors given the same donor ID's? Donor unaware of his donor number.
16. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Yes, we ask donors and won't take donors who have donated elsewhere. {Note from Wendy: See the Style Network’s documentary “Sperm Donor”.}

**Pacific Reproductive Services**

1. How long do you store sperm for? No limit, as long as you pay.
2. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? Don’t have that information.
3. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? One rep: 15 families. Another rep: 20 families.
4. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? Unknown, not sure.
5. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic?  One rep: 25 years, paper. Another rep: Keep paper and electronic records forever.
6. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Which countries? One rep: Nationwide only, no international. Another rep: Only US. {Note from Wendy: we know that they have shipped sperm to at least one clinic in Mexico.}
7. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? As often as donors contact bank to update medical information (part of their contract).
8. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? Bank will contact families by email or phone.
9. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? They do recommend the DSR to families. {Note from Wendy: interesting fact: Only 2.6% of DSR members say the DSR was recommended by their sperm bank.}
10. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. One rep: the child contacts center and center arranges meeting at office with donor and child. Another rep: Bank will reach out to donor and then give contact info to kid. Donors cannot change their minds about one time contact.
11. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? Will they only contact your doctor? You directly? Parents notify bank; bank ads to donor file; send letters client regardless of whether issue is found to be on donor side or not.
12. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Will not allow donors to donate elsewhere. Ask during intake if they have donated elsewhere. {Note from Wendy: we know of PRS donors who have donated at multiple clinics.}.

**Xytex Cryobank**

1. How long do you store sperm for? Indefinitely, as long as you pay.
2. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? Rep had never paid attention to it. Usually donors run out within a certain time frame when they're active...No huge differences in age that she knows of.
3. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? 40 family limit. Donors usually don't meet limit. Xytex ships 50% of orders worldwide. {Note from Wendy: Xytex is one of the sperm banks with the largest number of large half-sibling groups.}
4. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? One rep says 40 family units worldwide. Another rep says, unknown. {Note from Wendy: we know families who have been told of much larger half sibling group numbers, directly from Xytex.}.
5. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic?  Indefinitely - 2010 went electronic and no more paper.
6. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Ship to almost every country except a few with restrictions.
7. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Bank contacts them every 2 years to check in about medical issues if haven't heard from donor; will notify client- patient if patient orders directly, doctor if doctor places order.
8. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? Notifies client- patient or doctor who placed order.
9. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? Bank lets people who are interested know about the DSR but they do not endorse it.
10. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Bank will give donor's full name, contact info and address.
11. If an "open" donor is purchased, can that donor change to an "anonymous" donor? One rep: Can change mind - but would take court order to prevent bank from releasing info to customers who already purchased it. If donor changes mind, all subsequent sales would be anonymous. Another rep: Can change to anonymous at any time, but if you had a child before the donor changes his mind, child still gets information.
12. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Ask donors - donors must live in area for a year and sign agreement that they will not donate to other banks while under contract.

**Idant**

1. How long do you store sperm for? 30 years.
2. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? Don’t know
3. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic?  As long as possible, paper only. {Note from Wendy: From a former Idant donor: I was a sperm donor several times in 1977 with Idant Corp. I believe that I have five unknown children from that era, presumably born in 1977 or 1978. A few years later I went back to Idant Corp. A new group had taken over the management and all the old records had been thrown out. They had no record of my ever having been there and no way to know how my sperm had been used or the names of the doctors involved.}
4. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Which countries? Yes. India, Singapore, Puerto Rico, Colombia
5. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Only active donors, every 3 months.
6. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? No.
7. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? No.
8. What are the proportions of open v anonymous donors? All anonymous.
9. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? Will they only contact your doctor? You directly? Not notified.
10. How will you be notified if a donor reports a medical or genetic issue? Will they contact your doctor? Or you directly? Not notified.
11. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? No, we do not.

**NW Andrology**

1. How long do you store sperm for? As long as you pay.
2. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? Not known.
3. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? One rep: unknown. Another rep: WA regulation not to disclose publically- no more than 15.
4. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? One rep: 16 siblings. Another rep: State says no limit - no more than 12 at this facility.
5. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic?  If pregnancy reported - indefinite. Donor and current owners - 8-10 years. Both. {Note from Wendy: From an offspring: “When I contact NW Andrology after I turned 18 they said that they had thrown out the records of my donor; they didn't have records of my birth from him, either (or any children from him). They said that even cases where the donor wanted complete anonymity they can still usually give a photo to the offspring, but they don't even have that for my donor.”}
6. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Which countries? All over depends on regulations. Can't ship to UK; in Australia depends by state.
7. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Bank checks in "frequently" with donors, esp. open donors. They update a page on site with news of new medical conditions for donors.
8. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? Via page on website, representative not sure if email goes out to families who have purchased sperm.
9. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? They don't promote the DSR. {Note from Wendy: this bank threatened a donor on the DSR and made him remove his posting.}
10. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. NW contacts them. If donor is interested then information will be released to child. (Info determined by donor.). They can't force donors to stay open to contact even if donor had signed contract.
11. If an "open" donor is purchased, can that donor change to an "anonymous" donor? Yes. They can change their minds when contact is made at 18 years old.
12. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? Will they only contact your doctor? You directly? Normally not. Donor is updated on website if issue is found.
13. How will you be notified if a donor reports a medical or genetic issue? Will they contact your doctor? Or you directly? One rep: Email to client. Another rep: Bank will post issue on site; up to client to check.
14. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Ask if donated elsewhere during initial application. Don't check. If the donor had, might be accepted on case-by-case basis if hadn't donated often elsewhere.

**Scandinavian Cryobank (NY Cryos)**

1. How long do you store sperm for? One rep: 25 years. Another rep: As long as it’s paid for.
2. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? 25 in the US.
3. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? Largest is 19 at this point.
4. How long do you keep records for? Both recipient and donor files? What type of records to they maintain, paper or electronic? By law, must keep 25 years. Both paper and electronic.
5. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Which countries? Do donor numbers change? Long list. Same but not numbers, names only.
6. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? Records are updated when donors contact the banks with medical issues. The bank does not check.
7. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? The bank calls families to inform them.
8. Do they recommend the DSR to families and/or donors for mutual consent contact? No
9. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Child contacts bank and receives all contact info for donor- full name, phone, address, and email address. Donor is not obligated to return calls.
10. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Bank asks, will not accept donors who have donated elsewhere. Bank does not check with other banks to verify.

**Seattle Sperm Bank**

1. What is the greatest distance in age between half sibling births that you know of? Sister company in Copenhagen in business for 10 years; Seattle office open since 2008; donors work with bank for 1-1.5 years. No child anywhere older than 5 years.
2. What limits are in place for number of births for one donor? First rep: family limit 25 worldwide, no limit on children. Another rep: Regulations differ worldwide- No regulations in the US. The ASRM recommends 25 children per city of 800K people or more- there are 27 areas in US. Company policy -not more than 25 kids from donor in US. US donors can be shipped internationally. Australia 5 per donor, Sweden 6. Claim largest distributer worldwide.
3. What is the largest group of half siblings that you are aware of from your facility? First rep: 25 siblings (the limit). Another rep: 50.
4. Do you ship sperm to other countries? Which countries? Have shipped to S. America, Europe, Australia, Asian countries, not yet to Africa.
5. Do you update donor’s medical records? How, and how often? First rep: Yearly, via free annual checkup provided by bank. Another rep: Yes, unknown how often, varies.
6. Is that information ever shared with families, and how? First rep: If medical problems are found, information is shared with the doctor only. Another rep: Bank does share via email if there were an issue (there hasn't been).
7. For "open" donors, explain exactly how donors are notified when an 18- year-old child requests contact. Email first, then a phone call.
8. How will they notify you if they become aware of a child born through your clinic with medical/genetic issues? Will they only contact your doctor? You directly? First rep: Doctor only. Another rep: They will contact both doctor and client.
9. Do they ask donors if they have donated anywhere else? Donors sign an agreement not to donate at other banks. They are in contact with other banks to try to ensure that this doesn't happen.