

From: Sarah Rappaport
To: [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: RE: Invitation to submit to Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into the Science of mitochondrial donation and related matters
Date: Saturday, 5 May 2018 1:21:39 AM
Attachments: [Science and Technology Select Committee - WellcomeTrust Mitochondrial Donation.pdf](#)
[Wellcome Trust - Mitochondrial Donation - 1 Page Summary.pdf](#)
[Wellcome Trust Mitochondrial Donation - FAQ.pdf](#)

Wellcome exists to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. We're a global charitable foundation, both politically and financially independent. We support scientists and researchers, take on big problems, fuel imaginations, and spark debate.

Wellcome has a long-standing interest in the development of the techniques used in mitochondrial donation. We are a key supporter of the Wellcome Trust Centre for Mitochondrial Research based at Newcastle University and headed up by Professor Doug Turnbull. This is a world leading centre for research and in 2012 received £5.8 million of funding to continue to develop their work, which included £4.4 million from Wellcome.

Mitochondrial DNA disease is a devastating condition that can lead to serious disability and death, and often strikes at a very young age. It is passed from mothers to their children and is caused by faulty mitochondria - the "batteries" that provide cells with energy. It cannot be treated and in many families there are unfortunately multiple family members affected.

Mitochondrial donation works by transferring the nuclear DNA (the unique genetic information that makes us who we are) out of a patient's egg containing faulty mitochondria and put it into a donor egg, containing healthy mitochondria, which has had its nuclear DNA removed.

Regulations to permit mitochondrial donation were passed in the UK after seven years of extensive scrutiny; there were independent ethical reviews, three separate reviews of the scientific evidence on the technique's safety by a specially convened independent panel of experts, and an extensive public consultation. Together this has revealed broad support and approval from the public in the UK and scientists from around the world.

We welcome the Senate inquiry into mitochondrial donation and making these life-changing techniques available in Australia. Please find enclosed documents that Wellcome has previously prepared and submitted during the UK's consideration of these techniques, which we hope will be helpful in your deliberations.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact me.

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