

The ethics behind three-parent babies

SIR – We wish to express our profound concern at the intention of the British Government to permit the modification of the human genome through the Human Fertilisation and Embryology (Mitochondrial Donation) Regulations (2015).

While we associate ourselves strongly with the overarching motive of Britain in bringing forward these regulations, modification of the human genome is unethical and cannot be permitted.

The proposals violate the fundamental standards of human dignity and integrity of the person, which form part of the constitutional traditions common to all EU member states, and which are now enshrined for all citizens as binding law in the Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights.

We are advised that the regulations also fall within the ambit of the Clinical Trials Directive (2001) and the Clinical Trials Regulation (2014). Both prohibit "modification to the subject's germ-line genetic identity".

These proposals put Britain out in front of a race to the bottom as far as standards of human dignity are concerned. We call on the Prime Minister to withdraw this legislation.

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and 52 others; see telegraph.co.uk

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