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The daddy of them all with his miracle babies



Dr Daniel Potter meets Addison McMahon, twins Samantha and Jack Burrows, and Dedan and Eyle McMahon at Centennial Park yesterday. Picture: Nik Gibson

LISA POWER
FAMILY REPORTER

It's not every day you get to meet your maker.

Amid the chaos of overtired babies and exuberant toddlers, Dr Daniel Potter was yesterday thanked by some of the 150 Australian parents who owe their family to him.

The cause of the celebration — "miracle babies" born after treatment ranging from surrogacy to sex selection and egg donation — cried, slept and, in one case, vomited while being cuddled by the

American fertility specialist. Dr Potter, who will discuss reproductive technology at a public seminar tonight, said that Australians were increasingly turning to his HRC Fertility clinic.

"The three things that are not permitted here (sex selection, commercial surrogacy and egg donation) we have a special competency in."

"If you look at surrogacy in India, you have people essentially being held hostage for whatever amount of time, who may or may not be getting the money they are supposed to be paid, whereas

in the States we have compensated surrogacy."

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guidelines on assisted reproductive technology in Australia are currently under review.

Sex selection is only permitted to reduce the transmission of serious genetic conditions, a NHMRC spokesperson said.

"Commercial surrogacy is illegal in NSW but the authorities take the approach that the legality or illegality of conduct is not relevant to determining citizenship", said

Jenni Millbank, a professor of law and surrogacy expert at the University of Technology.

"An increasing number of high profile lawyers and doctors and ethicists and regulators are saying we need to reconsider our approach to commercial surrogacy."

"That doesn't mean throwing the doors open and having surrogacy on offer. But we do need to have a more open and accessible pathway to surrogacy."

"(Australian doctors) are afraid to talk to their patients about surrogacy."

"They can't even talk to

them to give them their options and advice and I think that means people are going off to India and Thailand without even knowing the practices they are engaging in like multiple embryo transfer," she said.

After seven boys, Judi McMahon turned to HRC Fertility to ensure her last two children were girls.

Addison is now two while Eyle who is genetically her twin is seven months.

"We aren't quite balanced but it is good to have a few more girls around the house," Ms McMahon said.

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