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Title: Evans v Amicus Healthcare Ltd

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Status: <a>C Positive or Neutral Judicial Treatment

Evans v Amicus Healthcare Ltd

Hadley v Midland Fertility Services Ltd

Court of Appeal (Civil Division)
25 June 2004

Case Analysis

Where Reported

[2004] EWCA Civ 727; [2005] Fam. 1; [2004] 3 W.L.R. 681; [2004] 3 All E.R. 1025; [2004] 2 F.L.R. 766; [2004] 2 F.C.R. 530; (2004) 78 B.M.L.R. 181; [2004] Fam. Law 647; (2004) 148 S.J.L.B. 823; Times, June 30, 2004; Independent, June 29, 2004; Official Transcript

Case Digest

Subject: Health Other related subjects: Human rights

Keywords: Consent; Discrimination; Embryology; In vitro fertilisation; Medical treatment; Proportionality; Right to respect for private and family life; Withdrawal

Summary: The clear policy of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 was to ensure the continuing consent of both partners to IVF treatment, from commencement to the point of implant of any frozen embryos created in the process, and against that background the court had to be extremely slow to recognise or create a principle of waiver that would conflict with the parliamentary scheme.

Abstract: The appellant (E), who was infertile, appealed against a decision that she was not entitled to use frozen embryos created by IVF treatment after separating from her male partner (J) who had withdrawn his consent to the treatment ([2003] EWHC 2161, [2004] 2 W.L.R. 713, [2003] C.L.Y. 1778). E and J had given their written consents to each other's treatment "together" to include the "use" and storage of their embryos. The judge had rejected E's application for an injunction to restore J's consent and also her application for a declaration of incompatibility argued on the basis that her rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 Sch.1 Part I Art.8 and Art.14 had been breached by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 Sch.3. E contended that the judge had erred (1) in his construction of the words "treatment together" and the phrase "used in providing treatment services" in Sch.3 para.4(2)(a) of the 1990 Act, and that for the purposes of Sch.3 para.4(2)(a) the requisite "use" had been fulfilled by the separation and choice of suitable eggs fertilised for storage; (2) in holding that the interference with her private life was necessary and proportionate under Art.8(2); (3) in holding that E had not been discriminated against in the enjoyment of her Art.8 rights in contravention of Art.14; (4) in holding that J had not consented to the continuing treatment of E, and that therefore there was no continuing consent from which J could be estopped from withdrawing.

Held, dismissing the appeal, that (1) under the 1990 Act "together" was an adverb which qualified the treatment to a man and a woman whilst the couple were united about the treatment and irrespective of the nature of their relationship. Although consent could be subject to conditions, varied, or withdrawn, the clear policy of the 1990 Act was

to ensure continued consent from the start of the treatment until implant and the court had to be extremely slow to recognise or create a principle of waiver that would conflict with the statutory scheme. J was entitled under the 1990 Act to withdraw his consent since E's future treatment would not be "treatment together" with him, R (A Child) (IVF: Paternity of Child), Re [2003] EWCA Civ 182, [2003] Fam. 129, Centre for Reproductive Medicine v U [2002] EWCA Civ 565, [2002] Lloyd's Rep. Med. 259 and R. (on the application of Quintavalle) v Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority [2003] EWCA Civ 667, [2004] Q.B. 168 applied. The judge's decision that an embryo was only "used" when transferred to the woman was upheld. There was a distinction between "use" in Sch.3 para.4(2)(a) and "creation" in Sch.3 para.6(1) which did not support E's contention that the embryos were deemed to have been used on the day of their creation. (2) There was no available way to interpret the 1990 Act which would make J's withdrawal of consent immaterial to the continuation of E's treatment. The principles which underpinned Sch.3 of the 1990 Act were that of female self determination and bilateral consent to the point of implantation, following which the mother would have control of her pregnancy. There was no alternative system which would achieve the objectives of the legislation whilst being compliant with the 1998 Act. Although the refusal of treatment was an interference with E's Art.8(2) rights, nevertheless it was proportionate to the need which made it legitimate, S (Children) (Care Order: Implementation of Care Plan), Re [2001] EWCA Civ 757, [2001] 2 F.L.R. 582 considered. (3) E's rights under Art.14 had not been breached since the factors which made the material provisions proportionate under Art.8(2) also provided justification to any discrimination under Art.14. (4) J could not be estopped from exercising his statutory right to withdraw his consent and it would be against public policy for courts to enforce agreements to allow the use of genetic material.

Judge: Thorpe, L.J.; Sedley, L.J.; Arden, L.J.

Counsel: For the appellant: Robin Tolson QC, S Freeborn. For the second respondent: Kambiz Moradifar. For the fourth respondent: Jason Coppel. For the fifth respondent: Dinah Rose.

Solicitor: For the appellant: Withy King. For the second respondent: Davey Franklin Jones. For the fourth respondent: Department Solicitor. For the fifth respondent: Morgan Cole.

Appellate History & Status

Family Division

Evans v Amicus Healthcare Ltd

[2003] EWHC 2161 (Fam); [2004] 2 W.L.R. 713; [2003] 4 All E.R. 903; [2004] 1 F.L.R. 67; [2003] 3 F.C.R. 577; (2004) 75 B.M.L.R. 115; [2003] Fam. Law 879; (2003) 100(39) L.S.G. 38; (2003) 153 N.L.J. 1519; (2003) 147 S.J.L.B. 1150; Times, October 2, 2003; Independent, October 14, 2003; Official Transcript

Affirmed

Court of Appeal (Civil Division)

Evans v Amicus Healthcare Ltd

[2004] EWCA Civ 727; [2005] Fam. 1; [2004] 3 W.L.R. 681; [2004] 3 All E.R. 1025; [2004] 2 F.L.R. 766; [2004] 2 F.C.R. 530; (2004) 78 B.M.L.R. 181; [2004] Fam. Law 647; (2004) 148 S.J.L.B. 823; Times, June 30, 2004; Independent, June 29, 2004; Official

Transcript

Complaint dismissed

European Court of Human Rights

Evans v United Kingdom (6339/05)

[2006] 2 F.L.R. 172; [2006] 1 F.C.R. 585; (2006) 43 E.H.R.R. 21; [2006] Fam. Law 357; (2006) 156 N.L.J. 456; Times, March 17, 2006

Related Cases

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority v Amicus Healthcare Ltd

[2005] EWHC 1092 (QB); Official Transcript; QBD

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R (A Child) (IVF: Paternity of Child), Re

[2003] EWCA Civ 182; [2003] Fam. 129; [2003] 2 W.L.R. 1485; [2003] 2 All E.R. 131; [2003] 1 F.L.R. 1183; [2003] 1 F.C.R. 481; (2003) 71 B.M.L.R. 157; [2003] Fam. Law 394; (2003) 100(13) L.S.G. 27; (2003) 153 N.L.J. 317; Times, February 20, 2003; Independent, February 25, 2003; CA (Civ Div); 2003-02-19

Centre for Reproductive Medicine v U

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S (Children) (Care Order: Implementation of Care Plan), Re

[2001] EWCA Civ 757; [2001] 2 F.L.R. 582; [2001] 2 F.C.R. 450; [2001] H.R.L.R. 50; [2001] U.K.H.R.R. 928; [2001] Fam. Law 581; Times, June 7, 2001; Independent, June 5, 2001; Official Transcript; CA (Civ Div); 2001-05-23

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R. v Lichniak (Daniella Helen)

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R. (on the application of Anderson) v Secretary of State for the Home Department

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S.L. Rev. 2004, 43(Aut), 3-4

Administrative law update (October).

Administrative law; Child support; Children; Community care; Education; Extradition; Homelessness; Human rights; Medical treatment; Mental health; Scotland; Social security; Social welfare.

SCOLAG 2004, 324, 198-204

Books

Arlidge, Eady & Smith on Contempt 4th Ed. Incorporating First Supplement

Chapter: Chapter 2 - Contempt of Court: the Constitutional

Dimensions

Documents: Sub-section I. - The so called "margin of appreciation"

Arlidge, Eady & Smith on Contempt 4th Ed.

Chapter: Chapter 2 - Contempt of Court: the Constitutional

Dimensions

Documents: Sub-section I. - The so called "margin of appreciation"

Chitty on Contracts 31st Ed. Incorporating First Supplement

Chapter: Chapter 3 - Consideration

Documents: Sub-section (iii) - Equitable Mitigations

Chitty on Contracts 31st Ed.

Chapter: Chapter 3 - Consideration

Documents: Sub-section (iii) - Equitable Mitigations

Phipson on Evidence 18th Ed.

Chapter: Chapter 5 - Estoppels

Documents: Sub-section (c) - Restrictions on estoppels

Phipson on Evidence 18th Ed.

Chapter: Chapter 5 - Estoppels

Documents: Sub-section (c) - Promissory estoppel

The Law Relating to Parent & Child in Scotland (SULI) 3rd Ed. Norrie

Chapter: Chapter 2 - Ante-Natal Issues

Documents: The Stage before Pregnancy

The Law Relating to Parent & Child in Scotland (SULI) 3rd Ed. Norrie

Chapter: Chapter 2 - Ante-Natal Issues

Documents: During Gestation

The Law Relating to Parent & Child in Scotland (SULI) 3rd Ed. Norrie

Chapter: Chapter 4 - Parenthood and Assisted Reproduction

Documents: Parenthood Determined by the Human Fertilisation and

Embryology Act 2008

White Book 2014

Chapter: Section 3 - Other Proceedings

Documents: Section 4-Declaration of incompatibility

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