

LexisLibrary - The regulator's resource

Why the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's (HFEA) Head of Legal trusts LexisLibrary for the most up-to-date legislation and case law

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The HFEA is the UK regulator responsible for making sure that all fertility clinics in the UK, and all research centres in the UK that use human embryos, comply with the law.

As Head of Legal, Catherine Drennan spends a large proportion of her time explaining to her colleagues – the senior management team, the Board and policy developers – what the law says, how to interpret it, and what the practical effects of it are. And when she needs to refer to the law, she uses LexisLibrary to do it.

“ What's good about it is that whenever there are changes to our legislation, I can get an up-to-date version of our Act, without having to read the statutory instrument that amended it. It saves so much time and makes it easier to read what is already a very complex piece of legislation.

As well as helping her colleagues interpret and comply with the law, Catherine's also responsible for ensuring the fertility clinics they regulate do the same.

“ I spend a lot of my time helping fertility clinics understand what the law is and how they are meant to be complying with it. Often, I'll cut and paste the relevant sections from LexisLibrary into an email – or the whole statutory instrument.

Reputation and risk

The decisions that the HFEA make day to day affect the lives of the thousands of people who undergo fertility treatment in the UK every year. Having access to accurate, up-to-date legislation is absolutely vital. Any mistakes could have extremely serious ramifications.

“ We have a statutory duty to promote compliance with and uphold the legislation. If I didn't have LexisLibrary, I'd have to rely on [legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk). Although it's free, very often the legislation isn't up to date. It would have a huge impact on our reputation if we were referring people to the wrong version.

But there are also times when Catherine needs to check not just what the law is today, but what it was at a particular point of time in the past. As well as current legislation, LexisLibrary also makes it easy to access historic versions of legislation.

“ There are times when I have to go back to earlier versions of the legislation, and having those historic versions makes my life so much easier. With LexisLibrary, I don't have to go digging around in the deepest historical archives. That's been enormously helpful.

In the loop

Catherine also finds LexisLibrary's weekly case law updates useful for keeping on top of the latest developments.

“ Because I work alone and don't have other lawyers around me, I have to do my own awareness-raising. So the weekly case law updates are a useful way of keeping abreast of what's going on elsewhere in the public sector.

But ultimately, the real value of LexisLibrary is about trust.

“ In a sector like ours, where we're dealing with people wanting to have babies and the artificial creation of life, there can be a lot of emotions. So when you're developing policy, you have to be able to tie it back to the law. This means the people you regulate understand they have to follow it. I know I can go to LexisLibrary and be confident I'm getting the most accurate, up-to-date legislation.

LexisLibrary provides quick and comprehensive access to the most up-to-date legislation, case law, forms and precedents plus exclusive content and expert commentary. Find out more [lexisnexis.co.uk/lexislibrary](https://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/lexislibrary)