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Health insurance will soon cover IVF surrogacy for women who cannot have children

Health insurers will soon cover the costs for cisgender women who use in vitro fertilization with a surrogate mother when they are otherwise unable to carry a pregnancy to term. Women whose ovaries still contain eggs, but need assistance from a surrogate mother, will find the IVF procedure covered by the basic health insurance package residents of the Netherlands are required to have.

Health Minister Ernst Kuipers said he will adopt the advice from the National Health Care Institute to expand the basic coverage to include IVF surrogacy. This will happen once the new Child, Surrogacy and Lineage Act comes into force, he told KNOV, the organization representing midwives in the Netherlands.

At the same time, Kuipers indicated that he does not yet think that IVF surrogacy should be reimbursed from the basic health insurance package when it comes to other family forms, such as male couples, single prospective fathers or transgender persons. The Health Care Institute was in favor of expanding this coverage further, in part because of the legal inequity created by only covering cisgender women.

The minister said he understands that these groups may also wish to have children, requiring the help of an IVF surrogate mother. But in these situations it is not about a medical indication and that is the basis on which the health insurance reimburses for care, Kuipers said. However, he is not blind to the attention that is now being paid to these situations.

"This calls for a broader discussion," which he intends to address. He will soon send a letter about the matter to the Tweede Kamer, the lower house of Dutch parliament.

In vitro fertilization requires the efforts of a laboratory to fertilize an egg with sperm. The embryo can then be transferred into fertilization (with an egg and sperm) takes place in a laboratory. The embryo is then transferred to a uterus.



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