

## **Vietnam welcomes first twin babies in surrogacy after legalization**

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*Twin boys delivered by a surrogate at Tu Du Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City March 16. Photo: Tu Son*

Two twin boys were born healthy in Ho Chi Minh City last week by a surrogate mother, who said she was happy to help her cousin become a parent.

The babies were delivered in a C-section procedure at Tu Du Hospital on March 16, weighing around two kilograms each.

Doctors from Tu Du, a leading IVF center in Asia, said the biological mother was among the first seeking help at the hospital after Vietnam approved non-commercial surrogacy services in June 2014.

The 29-year-old and her husband had spent their first five years of marriage trying to have a child. Doctors later found she was born without an uterus. Her eggs are healthy.

The couple, both factory workers, asked her cousin Ngo Thi My, 34, to help carry their embryo after IVF conception. They live next door to each other in the central province of Khanh Hoa.

The transfer was successful and the first sonogram showed that it was a twin pregnancy.

**'I saw how much she wants to be a mom'**

My was married. One of her two sons died at an early age and her husband left after they had many conflicts.

She works trivial jobs to take care of her other son, now 10 years old.

“My life is not easy, but at least I have a son to share everything with,” My said, as cited by news website Dan Tri.

She said that is the reason why she accepted to help her cousin.

“Every time she looked at the children in the neighborhood playing, I could see how much she wants to be a mom.”

My said she simply thought that the couple’s joy would be hers too, but the pregnancy period was not that simple.

There were rumors in the neighborhood that she was having a baby out of wedlock and surrogacy was just a lie.

The most difficult part was to explain to her son.

But My survived all.

### **Second case**

“I’ve heard the babies crying and seen the happy tears from my cousin. I know that my life will be more joyful from now on,” My told Dan Tri from her bed at Tu Du.

“I believe that the boys will grow up and have a lot of respect for their mother and the value of family.”

The boys are the second legal surrogacy case in Vietnam. A baby girl was delivered in Hanoi in January.

Surrogacy services had reportedly been provided illegally long before that, which prompted officials to make them legal.

Surrogates must be someone who has given birth successfully and have familial relationship with either the prospective father or mother, a policy aiming to make sure the service is not exploited for commercial purpose. Eligible women can only be a surrogate once.

More than 100 applications have been approved nationwide including 19 at Tu Du Hospital.

The fee is equal to an IVF procedure, which costs an average of VND60 million (US\$2,700).