Letter to the editor on: “Never too late? Quadruplets at the age of 65 years”

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Dear Editor,

We read with great interest the article by Larry Hinkson et al. entitled “Never too late? Quadruplets at the age of 65 years” [1]. They reported a quadruplet pregnancy at the maternal age of 65 following in vitro fertilization (IVF) from cross-border reproductive care with donor eggs and sperm, all children born were at 25 weeks’ gestation and survived, but poor neurodevelopmental outcome remains a major concern. This case generated a debate on ethical, psychosocial and medical questions. The highly skilled multidisciplinary team of obstetricians, midwives, cardiologists, internists, anesthetists, neonatologists and ongoing psychosocial support were impressed. We would like to congratulate and thank the authors for their excellent work, which has aroused heated discussion. When we sent the exciting and amazing article to our colleagues, they were all shocked. However, the extreme case is hardly to be copied in clinic, we would like to address some details we care about most.

The pregnancy of the 65 year-old woman after IVF was a miracle in clinic, we were wondering if the authors could provide the treatment protocol for IVF if possible? Because different treatment protocols for IVF might have different pregnancy or IVF outcomes [2, 3]. We were also interested if the “advanced post-menopausal age” mother had been menopausal or not before IVF? If yes, how old?

Multifetal pregnancy reduction (MPR) has been a clinically necessary procedure to prevent the complications of high-order multiple pregnancy (HOMP) [4]. In the article, the authors said, “the patient declined unselected embryo

reduction”, we would like to ask if embryo or fetal reduction has moral, ethical, or gestational weeks limitations in Germany? To inform the pros and cons of unselected embryo or fetal reduction for quadruplets should be the doctors’ responsibility, but the final decision might be made by the patient. We believe the patient would have better accepted embryo or fetal reduction to prevent the complications of multiple pregnancy.

We congratulate the authors and appreciate the editor for publishing such an interesting article.

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Declarations

Conflict of interest The author declares no conflict of interests.

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