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As the IFFS continues to expand its portfolio, we move toward the triennial congress in Delhi, scheduled for 24-29 September 2016. The Scientific Committee, under the direction of Basil Tarlatzis, has identified topics for all trilogies and keynotes. Per IFFS tradition, trilogies usually consist of one fundamentally basic science talk, one talk on the translation of advances into potentially transformative patient care, and one talk on clinical experience during implementation. It should be noted that when trilogy speakers are selected, the IFFS takes into account their country of origin. Both IFFS member societies – the Indian Society for Assisted Reproduction (ISAR) and the Indian Fertility Society (IFS) have involved their members, who constitute the national committees. These committees will select Abstracts and conduct postgraduate courses, including surgery, which will be transmitted from Delhi to the convention site.

The 2015 IFFS/UIT (Update in Infertility Treatment) workshops under the Education Director, Paul Devroey, continue to flourish. The first workshop, featured elsewhere in this issue, was held on 25-28 March in Lima, Peru, in conjunction with REDLARA (The Red Latinoamericana de Reproducción Asistida). The featured IFFS speakers were Professor Devroey, Debra Minjarez, Nicholas Polyzos, Leticia Urdapilleta, and Johan Sznit. We anticipate that one additional workshop will be held in 2015, at a location TBD. In addition, plans are underway for the next IFFS/UIT Symposium, to be held in Lisbon on January 2016. Paul Devroey serves as the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee, working with Simona Ispas-Jouron of Ferring. Additional members of the Scientific Committee include Professor Tarlatzis and myself, in my capacity as the IFFS President.

On 26-29 April the 2015 IFFS International Regional Symposium was held in Yokohama, Japan, concurrent with the Japanese Society of Reproductive Medicine (JSRM). The program was spectacular, with over 1000 registrants. Selected IFFS officers gave keynotes, complemented by excellent speakers from Japan and elsewhere in Asia. The IFFS trilogy format was utilized; each featuring one speaker from Japan, one from elsewhere in Asia, and one speaker from outside of Asia.

A new educational initiative has been developed with Merck Sharpe Done (MSD). In this capacity the IFFS will create workshops on Writing Abstracts for presentation in China. The first workshop is scheduled to take place in Shenzhen, on May 28 and the second is scheduled for Jinan on August 14. The IFFS Assistant Secretary General, Zi-Jiang Chen, and Professor Qiao Jie are spearheading oversight with China.

Ongoing initiatives, which will allow the IFFS to determine how best to meet the needs of its member societies, communicate through social media, and innovate ways for individual members from various societies to network are currently being considered.
The IFFS has released the Standards and Practice guide on recurrent spontaneous miscarriage. This latest publication from the IFFS Standards and Practice Committee is authored by Roy Farquarson, a member of the Committee and also a member of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology’s (ESHRE) Executive Committee.

The Committee found little evidence to support specific interventions and recommends further research in this area. However important conclusions were that women with recurrent first-trimester miscarriages and one or more second-trimester miscarriage should be screened for antiphospholipid antibodies and that women with second-trimester miscarriage should be screened for inherited thrombophilias, including factor V Leiden, prothrombin gene mutation and protein S deficiency. Furthermore that pelvic ultrasound (US) may be performed to assess for uterine anomalies in all women with recurrent first-trimester miscarriage and is essential for those with one or more second-trimester miscarriages. Recommended diagnostics also include exclusion of lower genital tract infection in cases of second trimester miscarriage and assessment of parental chromosomes in selected cases.

The overriding evidence indicates that couples with idiopathic recurrent spontaneous miscarriage, following appropriate investigations, have a high chance of successful pregnancy without treatment. Because of the lack of evidence, recommendations for treatment are limited to treatment of recurrent pregnancy loss and antiphospholipid antibody syndrome with aspirin and heparin. Anatomical uterine distortion may have a causal role but the evidence base for surgical intervention and correction is weak. The full guidance is available on the IFFS website.

Guidance in development by the Committee and likely to be released later in 2015 are Adjuvant Treatments in ART; Intrauterine Insemination and Clomiphene Therapy. For a full set of IFFS Standards and Practice guides go to: http://www.iffs-reproduction.org/?page=PolicyStandards.
Programa de Ética y Políticas Públicas en Reproducción Humana

Universidad Diego Portales
International Federation of Fertility Societies (IFFS)
Sociedad Chilena de Medicina Reproductiva (SOCMER)

Dr. Fernando Zegers Hochschild
Unidad de Medicina Reproductiva

On 7 and 8 November 2014, the IFFS Education Committee, together with the Chilean Society for Reproductive Medicine and the University Diego Portales Program of Ethics and Public Policies in Human Reproduction, organized the “Harmonizing Science and Bioethics when Confronting Reproductive Challenges” symposium in Santiago, Chile.

This activity brought together clinical and bioethical perspectives while confronting some of the reproductive challenges which society faces today. Some of the themes covered during the symposium were:

• The impact of infertility in the quality of life of women and men. A trans-cultural view.
• How bioethics adapt to new technology.
• Disclosure on the form of conception among families built with donor gametes.
• PGD, the right to be born healthy and the right to have a healthy child.
• Embryo freezing and the prevention of multiple births.
• Single and Double embryo transfer and the autonomy of patients to decide.

All of these controversial issues were addressed from a clinical or biological perspective, as well as from a bioethical perspective. The methodology used consisted of short lectures followed by extensive discussion with the public, as well as debates among professionals defending opposite positions, and followed by discussion with the public.

Given that much of the public discussion concerning access to fertility treatments and the exercise of reproductive rights in Latin America, are strongly influenced by moral principles contained in the Catholic tradition, one of the objectives of this symposium was to re-direct the discussions from a religiously based morality to secular evidence based bioethics.

The symposium gathered 160 participants, mainly gynecologists and experts in reproductive medicine; and a varied proportion of professionals and students from the Faculty of Medicine, Sociology, Psychology and Law.

The general belief was that this holistic approach to reproductive decisions was both enriching and worth emulating in different cultural environments.

160 Reproductive health care professionals were in attendance

Biosketch
Prof Dr. Mauricio Simões Abrão

After completing his Residency in the Dept. of Ob/Gyn at the University of São Paulo, School of Medicine in 1988, Dr. Abrao founded the Endometriosis Division at the same institution in 1990. In 2007, an IRB-approved and comprehensive tissue and fluid bank was established at the University in collaboration with Sirio Libanes Hospital. The tissue registry now houses more than 7000 samples, under a detailed protocol of collection, processing and storage followed closely by a dedicated pathologist and biologist. During this time, Dr. Abrao also founded the Brazilian Endometriosis and Minimally Invasive Society and was President from 2007 to 2013.

In 2011, the IVF Clinic of Sirio Libanes Hospital was established. In two years, the clinic ran more than 60 cycles per month and plans to expand to other Brazilian sites are underway. In 2012, the World Institute of Surgical and Clinical Education was established with Dr. Abrao on the Advisory Board in Minimally Invasive Surgery, with the mission of providing exceptional quality and outcome-based clinical and surgical training programs designed for the practicing physician. WISE has successfully run several intensive courses in Endometriosis and Urogynecology that have been very well-received.
Regional Meetings

Joint IFFS – SAMeR (Argentinean Society for Reproductive Medicine)

Dr. Marcos Horton
Co-Director of the Pregna Medicina Reproductiva

The Joint IFFS-SAMeR meeting was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from November 12 through 14 at the Hilton Hotel in Puerto Madero. As part of the XVI Argentinean Congress, the IFFS joined in as co-organizers participating in the main program and adding a full day of Pre-Congress courses.

The attendance was high, with 870 delegates registered and 655 attending, coming mainly from Argentina (95%) with others arriving from South American countries such as Uruguay, Perú, Paraguay, Ecuador, and Spain (5%).

During the Opening Ceremony, Dr. Joe Leigh Simpson described the Federation’s mission and pointed out milestones in the relationship of both Societies along the years. He highlighted the latest IFFS activities, including the recent partnership with Ferring and its UIT initiative. His speech was followed by a lecture from Dr. Richard Kennedy, about regulation in ART and the UK experience.

Faculty from the IFFS included Joe Leigh Simpson, Basil Tarlatzis, Paul Devroey and Richard Kennedy, with invited speakers Rachel Cutting and Stratis Kolibianakis.

The IFFS contributed to two Pre-Congress courses, one aimed at young specialists and fellows on how to design a research project, how to write a paper and submit it for publication, and how to give a lecture. The other was a safety and practice guidelines course which addressed the IFFS Practice Committee’s documents, safety, and accreditation issues.

One hundred eight (108) abstracts were received, of which, 16 were selected for oral presentation, and 64 for poster presentation in a digital format. Four (4) prize papers were presented during the last session, covering topics on in vitro maturation, training in andrologic surgery, VIP in implantation, and follicular VEGF.

The social program included a speaker’s dinner at the Duhau Restaurant at the Hyatt Hotel, with a wine and cheese tasting, and a private dinner at Dr. Polak’s house, including a tango show.

The meeting was a success thanks to the comfortable and suitable venue, and overall timely and professional organization. Together with a wonderful scientific program which addressed hot topics like fertility preservation, genomics in ART and prenatal medicine, time-lapse monitoring, quality control in the ART lab, fresh transfer, vs. freeze all strategies, and regulation, law and ethics.
On 27 and 28 November 2014 the second IFFS-UIT workshop was hosted in collaboration with the Algerian Society of Reproductive Medicine (SAMERE) in the western Algerian city of Oran. The main theme of the workshop was Age and Fertility.

Currently the average age of marriage and the increasing number of women participating in the workforce, and investing more in their careers, has led to first pregnancies occurring later in life. In these cases, dealing with infertility becomes more delicate and the success rate decreases over time due to ovarian aging. It becomes more difficult to respond positively to some young patients with ovarian reserves altered by pathologies such as endometriosis, ovarian surgery, certain anti-cancer treatments, and some genetic, environmental and auto-immune factors.

In collaboration with many experts from nations including Egypt, Belgium, France, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia, we have attempted, during the course of this workshop, to find an answer to the question: Are there preventative therapies which could enhance the results in these patients? What are the means in 2014 in which we can preserve fertility?

We enlisted 650 participants, which represents a 30% increase over the first meeting, which was organized in 2013. This workshop was conducted in 4 grand sessions.

First Session - Morning of the 27th of November
The following themes were discussed: age and fertility, premature ovarian failure, bio markers of ovarian reserves, and the diagnosis and etiology of poor responders. Different groups from Algerian centers presented their experiences handling poor responders.

This session included a symposium by FERRING Laboratories: Age and Fertility: challenges in handling of poor responders. The main message of the morning session was to identify patients with homogenous criteria, individualize the treatments, minimal stimulation, and pre-treatments which would help improve results.

Second Session – Afternoon of November 27th
This session centered on surgery and we chose to discuss one main organ; the ovary. The following themes were discussed: endometriosis and infertility, the impact of tube surgery on the ovary, ovarian tumors borderline and infertility, AMH and benign ovarian surgery and precautions in the case of ovarian drilling.

Third Session – Morning of the 28th of November
The following topics were discussed: abortive diseases, the failure of implantation, why and how to optimize endometrial receptivity. The main part of the session was a discussion which focused on embryonic and oocyte vitrification.

Oocyte vitrification is an effective method for the preservation of fertility and improves the live birth rate in cases of poor responders and older patients by proposing oocyte banking. Embryonic vitrification is also an excellent option for the preservation of the weak prognostic embryo after prolonged culture, it allows a synchronization between the embryo and the endometer, and saves the disruption of a stimulation cycle such as progesterone rise or OHSS.

The workshop concluded with a session about male infertility.
The XVIII World Congress was held in Montreal, Canada 21-28 May 2004. The IFFS President at the time was Roger D. Kempers. The program was organized at a very high scientific level, again with the use of Trilogies and Keynote lectures. This was the first congress to be shortened from a format of 5 days to one of 3 ½ days in duration. The congress that drew about 1000 registrants found itself competing for participants and industry support with an increasing number of other related international meetings such as the privately organized IVF World Congresses being held every 2 to 3 years. Efforts to have that group join with IFFS in holding a joint congress were unsuccessful.
Welcome to the land of rich heritage...

22nd IFFS World Congress
24-28 September 2016 | Delhi, NCR

Hosted by:
Indian Fertility Society &
Indian Society for Assisted Reproduction

www.IFFS2016.com