

Talk: Guidance on COVID-19 Vaccines and the impact on fertility and early pregnancy

Speaker biography

Mr Nicopoulos is the Clinical Director and “Person Responsible” at the Lister Fertility Clinic.

Mr Nicopoulos is widely published in peer-reviewed international journals, regular speaker at national and international conferences, regular contributor of fertility support networks, acts as a reviewer for a number of peer-reviewed journals and is an active member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology and a committee member of the British Fertility Society.

Learning outcomes

- Covid vaccine safety and fertility
- Covid vaccine safety and pregnancy
- Covid in pregnancy

Talk: COVID-19 HFEA regulations and the impact on clinics and patients

Speaker biography

Laura qualified as a nurse at the University of East Anglia in 1996 and her first roles were at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King’s Lynn supporting both planned and emergency admissions. Having NHS experience she took up a role in the private BMI hospital Sandringham, King’s Lynn as Deputy Ward Manager, gaining valuable experience of the independent healthcare sector. She re-joined the NHS at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon, in 2003 and progressed there to the role of Ward Manager in General Surgery. Joining Bourn Hall in April 2011, she was promoted to the role of Lead Nurse at Cambridge in 2013 and to Regional Lead Nurse for Bourn Cambridge and Norfolk clinics in 2017. Laura became secretary for SING (Senior Infertility Nurse Group) in 2018, and is now currently co-chair promoting sharing best practice as a sector and nurse education. Along with other SING members she co-ordinated and participated in a study day dedicated to Health care assistants in the fertility field, Laura has also chaired and presented at several internal and external meetings. “I feel I have really found my vocation working in the field of fertility and feel a strong sense of pride to be part of a group of very dedicated nurses.”

Talk summary

An overview of the impact of the closure and reopening of clinics, ensuring that the clinic was HFEA compliant, the impact on staff and the variance between clinics.

Learning outcomes

- Understand the impact in clinics
- Understand the HFEA requirements for reopening

Talk: Managing patient expectations through a global pandemic

Speaker biography

Tracey Sainsbury is an independent fertility counsellor providing support to individuals and couples before, during and following fertility treatment; with over 20 years' experience of providing fertility support, she is an Accredited member of both the British Infertility Counselling Association and the National Fertility Society. Tracey is also a member of the Advisory Panel for Fertility Network UK.

Talk summary

Promoting self-care for nurses, this presentation enhances understanding around how the impact of needing assistance to conceive can act as a trigger to retraumatize past experiences; meaning patients vulnerabilities and sense of helplessness are heightened, this happens routinely, not just during a pandemic.

Our needs as humans when we feel helpless, often can result in blame and anger being projected on to those trying to provide support and medical care. The pandemic has enabled an opportunity for change, the availability of a more varied platform of support initiatives accessible from home, prompted more autonomy for patients in accessing support, but also reinforced the need for clear communication and guidance from the clinics. Today we will explore those resources and how they can be useful for you too.

Learning outcomes

- Understanding fertility patients' reactions to the pandemic
- The need for self-care when supporting patients during a pandemic
- Enhanced understanding of fertility patient behaviours and strategies for support

Talk: COVID-19 and the impact on fertility funding and waiting times

Speaker biography

Kate Brian is Operations Manager at Fertility Network UK. She is Editor of the Journal of Fertility Counselling and a former lay member of the HFEA. She is Editor of the Journal of Fertility Counselling and a former lay member of the HFEA. Kate was the first Women's Voices Lead at the RCOG, and is an Associate Member of the College's Women's Network. Kate is the author of five books about fertility and pregnancy. She began her career as a television journalist and worked at the BBC, ITN and Channel Four News. Her two grown up children were both born after IVF treatment.

Talk summary

COVID led to delays for many fertility patients, and had a huge impact on patient wellbeing and mental health. Although the sector has been quick to resume treatment, we are still seeing delays and this is often a particular problem with referrals. There have been concerns about whether this will have an impact on funding, both for individual patients and across CCGs, and we will look at the current picture.

Learning outcomes

- Know more about the impact of COVID on fertility patients
- Appreciate the way delays have affected patients and the longer term issues in some parts of the country
- Understand the importance of the wider issues around fertility funding