Questions for the speakers

Session 64: Prospective Carrier screening of ART couples

Germline Characterization of Genes Associated with Spermatogenesis and Embryonic Developmental Competence in Azoospermic Men - Stephanie Cheung (U.S.A.)

Q: These are low numbers in all the groups, how representative will this be in a larger cohort?
A: Yes, we agree these are low numbers and to account for this we were careful to include only those gene mutations that were present in all of the patients from each cohort. We look forward to confirming our findings in a larger sample size once more specimens are donated.

Q: Have you studied the correlation between Sperm DNA fragmentation and the detection of aneuploidy in sperm?
A: In previous studies, we found that sperm DNA fragmentation increased progressively from the testicle to the epididymis and vas deferens, and was highest in the ejaculate. We also observed that sperm aneuploidy increased in the same manner.

Knowledge, attitudes and preferences regarding expanded carrier screening among reproductive-aged men and women in Belgium - Eva Van Steijvoort (Belgium)

Q: Did you find high levels of apprehension, toward the results, from the patients?
A: This survey study looked into the knowledge, attitudes and preferences among reproductive-aged men and women in Belgium by using a one-time anonymous questionnaire. Our study participants were not offered an ECS test in the context of this study. Therefore we couldn’t assess understanding of test-results.

We are currently performing an implementation study where the Belgian ECS offer is being offered to couples of reproductive-age. In the context of this study we do examine how individuals understand test-results. We hope to present these results next year.

Q: Did you find any info about expanded carrier screening aimed at donors if their gametes were going to have these tests?
A: Our research is currently focused on the views of couples of reproductive age in the general population. Nevertheless, we agree that it is also necessary to look into the implications of ECS for gamete donors as this test is also being offered in Fertility Clinics.