



*Fertility Society of Australia
2018 Annual Scientific Meeting, Melbourne 9-12 September*

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Helping people experiencing infertility to make informed choices in their quest for parenthood

Ensuring people experiencing infertility have adequate information about treatment options to achieve their dream of having a baby is the key focus of the 2018 annual conference of the Fertility Society of Australia starting in Melbourne today (10 September).

Leading fertility specialists from Australia and overseas will attend the conference to explore latest developments to help those living with infertility, which is defined as the failure to conceive after a year of unprotected intercourse, or the inability to carry pregnancies to a live birth.

In Australia, an estimated one in six couples experience infertility, the causes of which are equally shared between male and female partners.

Conference convenor, Professor Luk Rombauts, said increasing numbers of couples were seeking assisted reproductive technologies (ART), including IVF, often as a result of delayed parenthood to pursue career or personal ambitions.

The conference begins after breaking news that 15,198 IVF babies were born in Australia and New Zealand in 2016-17 as a result of cycles undertaken in 2016 – the highest number ever in the 40-year history of IVF in these countries. Latest data also shows the live birth rate per embryo transfer has increased from 22.5 per cent in 2012 to 26.2 per cent in 2016, the most recent year from which data is available.

“The ART of Caring is the theme of the conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to highlight that assisted reproductive technologies are about more than IVF units achieving the highest pregnancy rates for patients,” Professor Rombauts said.

Professor Rombauts, who is Vice-President of the Fertility Society of Australia and Group Medical Director of Monash IVF, added: “For many patients, the way in which their dream is fulfilled is another very important determinant of success.

“While achieving a healthy baby is the ultimate goal, the patient experience during the journey often determines how likely they are to continue treatment after an unsuccessful attempt, or whether they are likely to recommend the treatment to others.

“Couples obviously seek out IVF units that promote high rates of success, but studies have shown they are willing to trade this up to some extent against the level of patient centred care offered by the units.

“It involves listening carefully to and meeting the specific needs of patients, including providing them with adequate information to make good decisions about their own care.”

Professor Rombauts said distinguished international and Australian presenters would address the conference exploring new frontiers in assisted reproduction and patient care.

He said the conference would hear of latest research showing that patient centred care issues rated highly among those seeking assisted reproduction.

“Patient choice of doctor, access and proximity to quality care are among key factors that can make the IVF journey easier and possibly more successful,” he explained.

“Importantly, sometimes assisted reproduction will not be successful, but even here IVF units can provide care in making sure individuals or couples come to closure after they have made informed choices about their treatment options.

“The psychosocial support of patients seeking assisted conception is a vital aspect of quality care.”

For more information on speakers and the program for the 2018 annual scientific meeting of then Fertility Society of Australia, go to www.fsaconference.com

Interview: Professor Luk Rombauts is available for interview. To arrange, please contact Trevor Gill, FSA Media Relations, on 0418 821948 or e-mail lighthousepr@adelaide.on.net