



Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society
Société canadienne de fertilité et d'andrologie



2026 Embryology Summit

FROM PAIN POINT TO PROGRESS



DATE:

March 14, 2026



LOCATION:

DoubleTree by Hilton Toronto
Airport West
5444 Dixie Road, Mississauga,
ON, L4W 2L2



TIME:

9:30 AM - 16:30 PM

PROGRAM



Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society
Société canadienne de fertilité et d'andrologie

Embryology Summit

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM EST

Exhibit Hall Open

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM EST

Registration & Breakfast

9:00 AM - 9:10 PM EST

Introductions

Pauline Saunders

9:10 AM - 9:55 AM EST

When PGT Results are in Doubt: Managing Discrepancies Through Laboratory Review and Clinical Collaboration



Alissa Magwood

Alissa Magwood is a Scientific Advisor and Business Manager with Igenomix Canada. She has more than 25 years of genetics experience in both academic and clinical settings. Alissa has worked in fertility and reproductive health for the past 9 years and is passionate about helping providers and patients.



10:00 AM - 10:45 AM EST

Frozen, Forgotten, and Legally Fraught: Abandoned Embryos and Legal Risk



Sara Cohen

Sara R. Cohen, LL.B. is a fertility law lawyer based in Toronto, but with clients throughout Canada and beyond. She approaches fertility law with the compassion, empathy and respect it deserves. Sara's passion is to help build families and she considers herself very fortunate to have such a fulfilling career. After honing her skills in the commercial litigation group at one of Canada's preeminent national firms, Sara made the leap and translated her passion into a career. Sara acts on behalf of intended parents, surrogate mothers, egg donors, sperm donors, embryo donors, donor recipients, and other people involved with reproductive technologies. She also provides legal advice to domestic and international businesses in the fertility industry.

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM EST

Health Break

11:20 AM -12:05 PM EST

Mastering ICSI Do's and Don'ts



Wayne Caswell

Wayne is the Vice President of Laboratory Operations for Genetics and IVF and Fairfax EggBank. Prior to focusing on the quality and efficiencies. Wayne previously served as an Army Officer earning the Rank of Captain, specializing in Armored Cavalry and Reconnaissance operations. He did his undergraduate studies at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and his graduate studies at Marine Biological Laboratories, Woods Hole MA and Graduate Studies from Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk,VA. Wayne has led multiple reproductive Laboratories in Boston, Maine and New York. He also was the first Technical Application Scientist with Irvine Scientific where he established himself as an expert in Human oocyte and embryo vitrification. Wayne was also the Senior Director for Cooper Surgical's Center of Excellence where he was the primary instructor. Wayne is an invited lecturer at ASRM, ESHRE and many other Reproductive organizations.

Learning Objectives

- Understanding the history and principles of ICSI
- Techniques of ICSI
- Things to watch out for in application
- Quality tracking of data and KPIs



12:05 PM - 1:05 PM EST

Lunch

1:10 PM - 1:55 PM EST

Maximising Patient Chances by Expanding the Embryo Pool in ART

Balsam Al-Hashimi



Balsam Al-Hashimi is a highly accomplished Clinical Embryologist and registered Clinical Scientist, certified by both the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in the UK and the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS). She holds a master's degree in clinical Embryology from the University of Leeds and is currently undertaking a PhD in Reproductive Genetics at University College London (UCL), where her research focuses on chromosomal abnormalities and embryo development in assisted reproduction. Balsam serves as the Embryology Laboratory Manager and Head of Genetics at the London Women's Clinic, where she leads advanced embryology and PGT-A services and supports the integration of genetic technologies into clinical practice. Her role includes laboratory leadership, clinical innovation, staff training, and quality governance.

Learning Objectives

- Explore strategies to maximise patient chances by expanding the embryo pool in ART, particularly in poor-prognosis patients.
- Challenge traditional limits of oocyte, embryo, and fertilisation assessment
- Understand how rescued oocytes, poor-quality embryos, and non-2PN zygotes can contribute to live births
- Translate emerging evidence into practical clinical decisionmaking in ART

2:00 PM - 2:30 PM EST

Health Break

2:35 PM - 3:20 PM EST

AI in the Workplace



Dr. Halil Ruso

Halil Ruso, obtained his MSc (by research) Reproductive Medicine from University of Dundee and his PhD Histology and Embryology from Gazi University. He is a senior clinical embryologist with over 12 years of experience in reproductive medicine. He built his career at the Gurgan Clinic IVF Centre in Ankara, contributing to its expansion from a single reference unit into a multi-centre group, and served as the Group Director of Embryology. He is currently working at Avenues London as Laboratory Director of Innovation. Dr. Ruso has been an invited speaker at numerous national and international conferences, has contributed to peer-reviewed publications, and actively works on advancing evidence-based ART practices. He is the past Vice-President of the Turkish Society of Clinical Embryology (2023-2025) and previously served as General Secretary (2021-2023) for the same society.



3:25 PM - 4:25 PM EST

The Use of Sperm Stimulants Improves Sperm Selection and Embryology Outcomes When Motility Is Absent or Questionable After Processing

Sarah Qu



Sarah Qu is in her final year in the Master's of Clinical Embryology at the University of Toronto, where she returned after completing a Bachelor's of Science in Physiology and Immunology. Her passion for embryology began through an undergraduate reproductive biology class, where she discovered the specialized professional graduate program. Now nearing the completion of her degree, her commitment to this field is stronger than ever. In her future career as an embryologist, she is looking forward to contributing to the growth of the field and pushing for new innovations. Sarah is currently performing research under the supervision of Dr. Vanessa Bacal at Mount Sinai Fertility, where she is investigating the merit of fresh morula transfers for slow-growing embryos on day 5. Sarah is also very excited to continue her current placement at CReATe Fertility Centre in order to further develop her hands-on experience.

Carly Herrington



Carly Herrington is a second-year student in the Master's of Clinical Embryology program at the University of Toronto. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry and Human Biology from the University of Toronto Scarborough. Her interest in embryology developed through coursework in developmental biology and reproductive genetics and continues through laboratory training and research. She is currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Jennia Michaeli at Mount Sinai Fertility, examining the relationship between oocyte morphology and early embryonic outcomes. Carly is excited to continue her placement at Mount Sinai Fertility, where she is further developing technical skills and gaining practical experience in the IVF laboratory.

4:25 PM - 4:30 PM EST

Closing Remarks

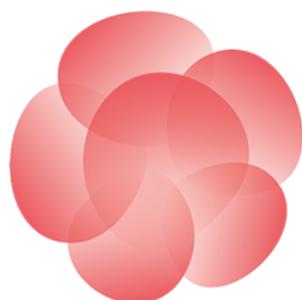
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM EST

Cocktail & Social Networking

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INSTRUMENTS



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3:25 PM - 4:25 PM EST	Debate Sarah Qu and Carly Herrington
4:25 PM - 4:30 PM EST	Closing Remarks
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