

September 29, 2010



CFAS ART Laboratory Special Interest Group Minutes: Annual General Meeting 29th September 2010, Vancouver Hotel, Vancouver

Chair: Simon Phillips

The meeting opened at 09:36

SP opened the meeting, welcoming those present. The agenda was presented.

1. Communicating with patients – giving bad news

SP introduced Dr Judith Daniluk from the University of BC. She spoke about the techniques involved in presenting information to patients, in particular when having to give bad news. Her presentation was a very practical explanation of the best way to achieve this goal. The presentation was well received and resulted in several questions and discussions including the perspective of a patient who had attended the presentation.

A suggestion that Dr Daniluk returned at a future time to make suggestions on how laboratory staff can cope with their own feelings when having to give bad news was made and will be followed up.

Dr Daniluk agreed that her **slides could be posted** on the ART LAB SIG area of the CFAS website.

2. ESHRE-ALPHA embryo grading consensus document

Sharon Mortimer presented the recently developed consensus document of embryo grading. In the document some attempt was made to standardize the timing of various embryo grading checks; such as fertilization check, first cleavage, second cleavage, through to blastocyst formation. She explained that it should soon be published thereby becoming a document that all clinics could adopt.

3. Summary of ALPHA discussion regarding vapor phase transport of vitrified material

Lisa Cowan discussed certain aspects of the May 2010 ALPHA meeting in which cryopreservation of embryos, eggs and sperm was the primary topic. Of particular interest at that meeting were the concerns about the transport of vitrified material using vapor phase containers due to the perceived increased risks of mini thaw cycles and the potential to damage material stored in this way. Although no consensus was reached LC highlighted the areas of concern and gave the opinions of various experts in the field. There was much interaction from the audience and the presentation lead into the first round table discussion session.

4. Roundtable session 1: To achieve consensus for inter-clinic gamete / embryo transportation

Participants were divided into 10 tables and asked to go through the supplied questionnaire on the transportation of gametes / embryos between Canadian clinics. The concept being to see what information and process participants believed was important in the transport of material and eventually to achieve a standard form and process that could be hosted by the CFAS for all Canadian clinics. A separate summary of this activity will be produced.

5. Roundtable session 2: To understand and to achieve implementation of the guidelines in order to minimize risks to patients and gametes and optimize treatment outcomes.

Following the lunch break including presentation of the CARTR results, participants were organized into five tables to discuss one of four of the five competences: Safe work practices, Critical Thinking, Communications, Quality and Risk Management. A questionnaire was completed by each table and then summarized at the end of the session. A further report will be produced on this activity and used to improve the content and application of these competency documents.

6. Business meeting

a. Salary Survey

The salary survey that had been carried out during the course of the year was presented to the members.

b. Diploma course

The draft document was presented for discussion. Some clarification of the need and position of the diploma course in the system was required. In addition it was mentioned that a draft proposal for certification of ART Laboratory Professionals was being developed with SP as the lead on this project. A model will be proposed so that those individuals who believe that they can pass the certification without completing the diploma course (ex. Because they have already completed M.Sc. from Leeds or similar) will not need to complete the diploma.

A vote was taken to assess whether the members believed that the Standards committee should continue to work on the diploma course and seek a grant for its development. Agreement to this proposal was unanimous.

c. Introduction of new Executive Member and new ART Lab SIG Chair

SP mentioned that Haimant Bissessar had completed his 3 years on the executive and was to rotate off; SP thanked Haimant for his hard work associated with being the ART Lab SIG secretary over the last few years. Haimant's role as Secretary has been taken by Pascal Des Rosiers and his place on the executive by Michael Neal following the election in summer 2010.

Furthermore, SP informed the members that Toni DiBerardino would be taking over as Chair of the SIG following the Vancouver meeting.

d. Semen Analysis Course

A survey of the members was taken to assess the interest in holding another semen analysis course and to assess the best time for such a course. Interest in the course was overwhelming but there was some discussion as to the best timing. Since the obvious place to hold the next course would be Toronto and the CFAS annual meeting will be held in Toronto in 2011 it was proposed to hold the course after the CFAS meeting. Participants in the previous course mentioned that this made for a very long week; however overall consensus seemed to be that this would be the logical timing. It was also mentioned that the Andrology SIG have shown an interest in the course also, so TDB and Sergey Moskovtsev (Chair, Andrology SIG) will work together on this project.

e. Other Business – Terms of Reference: SIG Members

It was presented to the membership that based on the current Terms of Reference there is no control on who can be a member of the ART Lab SIG since it is open to anyone who shows an interest in ART Laboratory work. This suggestion caused much discussion and both poles of concern were vocalized: both the democratic issues of limiting membership as well as the possibility of government or industry members influencing documents produced by the SIG.

A vote was taken to assess the interest in TDB investigating further; the yes votes were 11 to no votes 10. Therefore TDB will look at the terms of reference from other SIGs to see if and how they limit membership and report back to the members.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 16:56.

Respectfully submitted

Simon Phillips

Chair, ART Lab SIG