Module 3

Sperm Cryopreservation in Assisted Reproduction

The modern sperm bank has a duty of care to those patients and the departments that refer them to work to best practice guidance, keep risk to a minimum and comply with regulations. There are a number of important stages along the path to successful cryopreservation and at each part of the process; technical and managerial weaknesses could adversely affect the final outcome. With the implementation of the EU cells and tissues directive, sperm processing and cryopreservation is under more scrutiny than it has ever been. Only validated (demonstrated efficacy and safety) methods are permissible and centres should only operate within a quality management framework. This includes ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained, have a personal record of their competence and ongoing development.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to complete this module satisfactorily you must already be competent in basic semen analysis, will have most likely already completed Module One, and MUST be working in a HFEA licensed centre that currently undertakes cryopreservation of gametes.

The aim of this logbook is to help the healthcare scientist to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills (competence) required for the successful cryopreservation of sperm or testicular tissue with the primary aim that they be used in assisted reproduction technologies (ART). The competencies are based on the occupational standards developed by the ABA and ACE (Association of Clinical Embryologists) as part of the skills for health program and learning of these relies heavily on the
individual having already gained competence in the preceding standards for diagnostic semen analysis (Module 1) and to an extent (although not essential) the standards for therapeutic sperm preparation (Module 2).

The individual is encouraged to both hone their own practical skills and to reflect on their current practice. In addition they should consider the evidence to support the use of current methods, suggest how improvements may be made and to assess local risk. The logbook acts as a record of evidence and reflective practice and will ultimately be examined as part of an assessment of competency.

After the completion of this section, each trainee should be able to:

- Carry out and understand the basic methods of sperm cryopreservation
- Tailor the cryopreservation method to sample quality and future treatment
- Process cryopreserved sperm for treatment
- Understand the basic cryobiology underpinning current methods
- Understand the limitations of sperm cryopreservation
- Understand the risks and regulatory requirements associated with cryopreservation

You will be expected to complete Module 3 within one year.

Cost: £300

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