

Worries and concerns of patients before starting fertility treatment: a multi-centre survey

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Study objective

To assess patients worries and concerns, and their ability to cope with stress and emotions before starting fertility treatment.

Materials and Methods

Patients answered an online survey. Data was collected electronically, anonymised, and kept confidential. The research team performed descriptive statistical analysis of data collected.

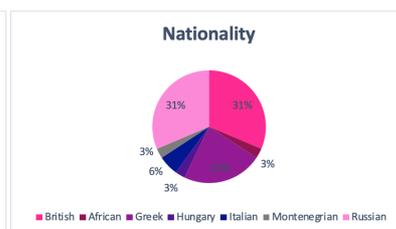
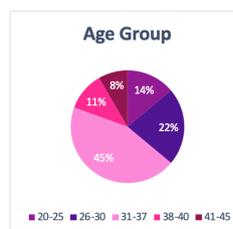
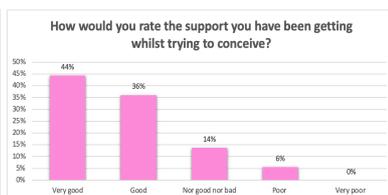
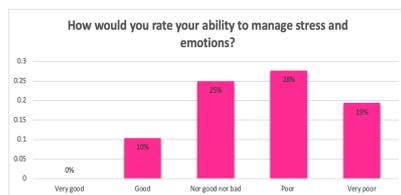
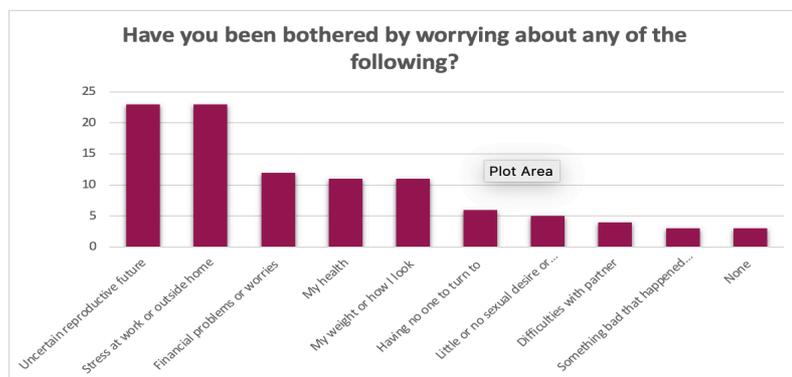
Results

Thirty-six patients took part into the survey, from age groups: 14% [20-25], 22% [26-30], 45% [31-37], 11% [38-40], and 8% [41-45]. About a third of patients was British, a third was Russian, 23% was Greek and the remainder were from Italy, Montenegro, Hungary and Africa. Fifty percent of patients had been trying to conceive for more than 2 years.

Study Design, Size, Duration

Five clinics providing adequate emotional support to fertility patients decided to investigate their patients worries and concerns ahead of fertility treatment.

A quantitative questionnaire was applied to patients due to start fertility treatment. A total of 36 patients answered the survey, between 9th October 2019 and 9th July 2020.



Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate that patients have several concerns and worries as they are about to start fertility treatment. Patients are mostly concerned about the uncertainty of their reproductive future and stress at work/outside home. A significant number of patients are also concerned about their finances, health and weight. Despite perceiving support as adequate, patients still reported low ability to cope with stress and emotions.

Women and couples embarking on fertility treatment may be more likely to require emotional support as the impact of the confounding factors is greater than what can be expected. In recent times, the coronavirus pandemic could be one of those confounding factors.

Limitations

The authors are aware of the limitations and reason for caution with this study. A total of 36 patients participated into the survey. Confounding factors, such as coronavirus, may also contribute to concerns around reproductive future uncertainty and stress at work or outside home.

Future research

In the future it would be interesting to investigate specific interventions to mitigate stress and the emotional impact of confounding factors on patients experience during fertility treatment.

