



# Challenges in Perinatal Mental Health

## Desafios em Saúde Mental Perinatal



9:00-10:00 (Western European Time - WET)

**SESSION 6: Medically Assisted Procreation and Pregnancy Interruption | MESA 6: Procriação medicamente assistida e Interrupção da Gravidez**

**Moderators | Moderadores: Maria Raúl e Maria Jesus Correia**

**1. Working Group and Intervision in Psychology in Medically Assisted Procreation - GIPPMA [Grupo de Trabalho e Interversão em Psicologia na Procriação Medicamente Assistida - GIPPMA]**

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**Abstract**

With a view to improving provision of care in the field of Psychology in the context of Medically Assisted Procreation (PMA), the GIPPMA - Working Group and Intervision in Psychology at PMA was created in 2019. This informal group includes Psychologists who carry out their work activities in a hospital of the SNS (North Zone) and a professor/researcher. The GIPPMA emerged on the personal initiative of these professionals with the central assumption of creating a shared practical approach, overcoming some of the difficulties present in clinical practice.

The group's objectives are: to build standardized psychological protocols in the field of PMA (pre-treatment evaluation, treatment and post-treatment protocols), as well as to develop, evaluate and propose work initiatives aimed at disseminating solutions and good practices in this area. GIPPMA has been emphasizing joint scientific research, seeking to contribute to knowledge on the subject, crucial as a basis for intervention. Similar to other areas of Psychology, which are undergoing rapid development and change, requiring professionals to be constantly updated/trained, this group also includes Clinical Intervision. Taking advantage of the geographical proximity and formal relations between institutions and following what the Portuguese Psychologists Association has been highlighting, GIPPMA considers this area of its activity as relevant in promoting well-being and self-care of professionals, in facilitating training and continuous development, as well as a safe and quality professional practice.

**Keywords:** Infertility, Medically Assisted Procreation, Psychological Care

**2. Sociodemographic characteristics, (in)fertility and psychological impact on women and men undergoing Fertility Treatments [Características sociodemográficas, (in)fertilidade e impacto psicológico em mulheres e homens que recorrem à PMA]**

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### **Abstract**

This transversal study includes 109 women and 109 men (heterosexual couples) who attended two Public Medically Assisted Procreation (MAP) Units in northern Portugal. The aim is to characterize the services' users regarding sociodemographic and lifestyle characteristics, clinical characteristics related to (in)fertility and psychological aspects of the experience/impact (individual, marital and social) of the MAR process.

The instruments used are part of the protocol used by the psychology services: Infertility Problems Inventory, Personal Assessment Scale of Intimacy in Relationships and SCREEN-IVF.

Data regarding gender differences, experiencing a first treatment or a second/or more treatments or when the diagnosis refers to primary or secondary infertility are presented. Associations between variables are also explored: rejection of a childless life, the need for parenthood, acceptance of infertility and intimacy (sexual, social, emotional closeness and communication) – little explored in other studies.

Gender differences were founded in some variables of psychological well-being, but not regarding different aspects of intimacy. These seem to be positively correlated with need for parenthood and difficulty in accepting infertility. The results suggest that sharing hardship and adversity related to infertility can contribute to greater intimacy between the couple. As other studies have identified, differences were found when couples are undergoing or not a first treatment, pointing to greater emotional overload associated with more treatments.

**Keywords:** Medically Assisted Procreation, heterosexual couples, psychological impact, sociodemographic characteristics

### **3. Male Pregnancy Failure: A Clinical Case [Insucesso de Gravidez no Masculino: Um Caso Clínico]**

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### **Abstract**

The theme pregnancy and parenting, in our time, is approached, experienced and felt by men and women. We are far from the time when it was just a female affair. However, when we talk about pregnancy failure and the experience of loss, the tendency continues to be predominantly considering and valuing the pregnant woman. We know the influence of culture in this area: a man doesn't cry; woman needs the support of man...

Recent literature and our clinical experience shows that, often, male suffering in the face of pregnancy failure is enormous, but it's still often silenced and even repressed. On the other hand, we know that the impact of this experience on men affects their mental health, but also their marital balance and, consequently, may influence the quality of a future parental relationship.

As health professionals who work in this area, we have a responsibility to help change this approach by promoting research, training and a normal approach to clinical intervention in this field.

It is with all this as a background that we present the clinical case of Pedro, a 35-year-old man who lost his daughter Maria at 28 weeks of gestation. We will highlight their experience of loss and the importance of a psychological approach/intervention for their elaboration of the grieving process.

**Keywords:** pregnancy failure, men

### **4. Mental health trajectory following perinatal loss: a descriptive study [Trajectória de saúde mental após experiência de luto perinatal: um estudo descritivo]**

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