

17th World Congress of the Academy of Human Reproduction

*15–18 March 2017
Rome, Italy*

TITLE

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL CHALLENGES AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE MEDICAL/HEALTHCARE STAFF IN HUNGARY REGARDING PRE- AND PERINATAL INFANT DEATH

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ABSTRACT

Context: The sorrow caused by pre- and perinatal loss is a phenomenon of complicated or even pathological mourning, a burden for the parents, for their environment and for the medical personnel, as well, yet, it is a less studied field. Objective: (1) To analyse the presently applied practices in Hungarian healthcare institutions, to compare the valid protocol with the effective support provided and to examine the effects these events have on the helping personnel professionally and psychologically. Method: In-depth interviews and questionnaires with the involved personnel. The research focuses on the practice of the institutions regarding overall support of the bereaved families; on the existing and wanted theoretical and practical competencies; on personal attitudes regarding death and loss and on the experienced difficulties. Results: Acting well professionally when facing pre- and perinatal loss is a specially demanding task for Hungarian healthcare professionals, with few tools to use when communicating, when helping the parents cope with grief and loss, or when coping with their own feelings, all these involving a high risk for burn-out and compassion fatigue for them. Conclusions: Specific trainings are to be implemented on all levels of the formative processes to improve coping strategies, communication and adequate supporting skills and competencies aimed at providing better support for the patients and offering self-protecting measures.

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