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THE ROLE OF THE FERTILITY NURSE SPECIALIST

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The presentation aims to outline the role of the fertility nurse specialist and fertility support staff/healthcare assistants. In the UK, the fertility nurse plays a critical role in the fertility treatment journey that a patient may undergo. Fertility services are provided in a number of centres including gynaecology clinics in larger hospitals, small satellite fertility centres and large private fertility clinics. The presentation will cover the following: the fertility nurses role in pre-conception care, focusing on the patient at the start of their journeys, senior fertility practitioners leading nurse led services, including managing specialist programmes such as surrogacy and preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), fertility nurse sonographers, advanced fertility nurse practitioners performing procedures including egg collections, fertility nurses supporting the patient throughout their journey, fertility nurses providing basic counselling, named nursing for fertility patients, feedback from patients on the nursing care that they have received, the importance of the fertility nurse being part of the multi-disciplinary team in the decision making and management of fertility patients, fertility nurses taking on extended roles such as management and quality and compliance, the role of the fertility healthcare assistant/support worker (non-qualified members of the team), fertility nurse specialist leading small satellite fertility clinics/centres, continuing professional development (CPD) for fertility nurses, outlining the annual training and courses available. The Royal College of Nursing Fertility Nurses Forum supports the education and career development of all fertility nurses and fertility healthcare assistants within the UK. As a steering committee member of this forum, I have recently co-authored a publication that aims to provide a framework for all fertility nurses and healthcare assistants for competency and career development. This framework covers all areas of fertility nursing from junior levels to advanced practitioners

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