

ROUNDTABLE LUNCH DISCUSSIONS

First: _____ Last: _____ Email: _____

Read below the Roundtable Lunch Discussion Topic options. Please type the Roundtable Number in the choice boxes below. Place a ZERO (0) if you would just like to enjoy lunch without education. You will receive your table number at NEFS registration at the meeting. Thank you.

First Choice: _____ Second Choice: _____ Third Choice: _____

1: “How to stand out and succeed in embryology”

—Led by: Darlene Davies, TS(ABB) - Director of Network Laboratory Services - First Fertility

DESCRIPTION: Many embryologists want more than benchwork. This roundtable discusses ways to grow your career in embryology through effective networking and following the right path based on your passions. Understanding your strengths and learning how to stand out in this field will guide you to growing a full and happy career.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Finding the right path by understanding your strengths and passions
2. Learning how to network effectively
3. How to be seen & heard so that you stand out amongst your peers

2: “AI Microfluidics and Robotics in the IVF Lab”

—Led by: Denny Sakkas, PhD - Boston IVF

DESCRIPTION: We will discuss the new technologies available in the IVF Laboratory and whether they are likely to change practice.

OBJECTIVES:

1. UNDERSTAND THE LIMITATIONS AND ADVANTAGES OF AI FOR GAMETE AND EMBRYO SELECTION
2. DISCUSS VARIOUS USES OF ROBOTICS AND MICROFLUIDICS IN THE IVF LABORATORY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
3. UNDERSTAND THE TIMELINES ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Roundtable 3: “What Patients Don’t Know: A Cross-Sectional Study of Fertility Knowledge at Entry to Care”

—Led by: Davina Fankhauser, Executive Director - Fertility Within Reach

DESCRIPTION: This discussion examines patient fertility knowledge at entry to care and how educational gaps impact timing, communication, and outcomes. Attendees will discuss data-driven strategies to improve reproductive health literacy, reduce stigma, and inform clinical and policy solutions.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Assess gaps in patient fertility knowledge at initial presentation to reproductive endocrinology care, based on findings from a cross-sectional survey study, and evaluate how these gaps impact timing of care-seeking and clinical communication.
2. Identify targeted educational interventions to improve reproductive health literacy, and examine their role in reducing stigma, supporting timely access to care, and informing employer and policy decision-making around fertility benefits.

4: “Designing the Fertility Patient Experience Like a Luxury Brand”

—Led by: Fallon Cragin, MSN, RN Practice Manager - Boston IVF

DESCRIPTION: This interactive roundtable explores how fertility practices can elevate the patient experience by borrowing principles from luxury service industries. Participants will discuss key moments that shape patient perception, identify common friction points in the care journey, and share practical strategies to deliver more personalized, compassionate, and high-touch experiences—without compromising efficiency or clinical excellence.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify key friction points in the fertility patient journey that impact trust, emotional well-being, and overall satisfaction.
2. Apply principles from luxury service industries (e.g., personalization, communication, continuity of care) to enhance the patient experience in a clinical setting.
3. Develop actionable strategies to balance operational efficiency with high-touch, patient-centered care without increasing staff burden.

5: “Heard or Held up? The Time Tension in Fertility Care”

—Led by: Elizabeth Carr - Genomic Prediction

DESCRIPTION: As patients are increasingly encouraged to use their voices and ask questions, clinicians and care teams are navigating a growing communication workload. This roundtable will explore practical strategies for structuring conversations—from the opening to the close—so patients feel heard, informed, and supported without extending calls beyond what is sustainable. We will discuss frameworks for setting expectations, guiding productive dialogue, and confidently bringing conversations to a satisfying conclusion that respects both patient needs and provider time.

OBJECTIVES:

1. How to balance patient expectations while also setting the conversation stage
2. Practical tools for structuring your conversation
3. Tools for making the most of a short window of time while still satisfying the patient

6: “Advancing Nursing Practice in REI: Innovative Care Models to Improve Access, Efficiency, and Patient Experience”

—Led by: Nicole Ouellette RN Practice Manager - Boston IVF - IVI RMA North America Partner, Bedford NH and Portland ME

DESCRIPTION: Many embryologists want more than benchwork. This roundtable discusses ways to grow your career in embryology through effective networking and following the right path based on your passions. Understanding your strengths and learning how to stand out in this field will guide you to growing a full and happy career.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Compare nursing care delivery models in REI and analyze their impact on access, efficiency, and patient experience
2. Identify practical strategies to address staffing challenges and optimize workflow in high-volume fertility centers
3. Explore opportunities for regional collaboration and shared best practices to advance nursing practice in reproductive medicine

7: “Recognizing and Preventing Burnout: Self-Care for the Clinician”

—Led by: Alice D. Domar, Ph.D, Chief Compassion Officer, Director of Research - Inception Fertility/The Inception Research Institute

DESCRIPTION: Burnout is epidemic amongst health care professionals and infertility patients are often anxious and distressed, leading to their caregivers experiencing symptoms of burnout.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize one's own symptoms of burnout
- Understand physical and cognitive strategies to lessen symptoms and prevent burnout syndrome.**

8: “Is there still a role for a cleavage-stage embryo transfer? a large multi-center RCT funded by PCORI”

—Led by: Werner Neuhausser, MD PhD - Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA

DESCRIPTION: For women with only a small number of embryos after fertilization, the comparative clinical effectiveness of embryo transfer at the advanced blastocyst stage versus the earlier cleavage stage is unknown. This RCT compares the clinical effectiveness of advanced blastocyst stage versus earlier cleavage stage embryo transfer during in vitro fertilization among this poor prognosis patient group. Results from this study will inform decision making for adults with infertility, clinicians, payers and policy makers to maximize the success of in vitro fertilization and improve patient-centered outcomes.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Evidence-based counseling strategies for cleavage-stage versus blastocyst transfer in the clinical setting
2. Implementation of large clinical trials at IVF centers

9: “Caring in the Chaos: Small Shifts, Big Impact in PACU/ OR”

–Led by: Laura Austin, RN, Trinity Health of New England, Comprehensive Women's Center Gynecologic Oncology
Hartford, CT

DESCRIPTION: This roundtable will focus on practical, time-efficient strategies that nurses can use to reduce patient anxiety and enhance the patient experience in fast-paced OR and PACU settings. Drawing from my background in fertility care and my current role in gynecologic oncology, I will share simple, meaningful interventions that help patients feel seen, supported, and more in control during vulnerable moments—without disrupting workflow.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify simple, effective techniques to reduce patient anxiety in perioperative settings.
2. Demonstrate how communication and small interventions can improve patient perception of care.
3. Integrate patient-centered strategies into fast-paced clinical workflows without impacting efficiency.

#10: “Natural Cycle Frozen Embryo Transfer: Strategies and Considerations

–Led by: Laura Meyer, MD, Illume Fertility, Norwalk, CT

DESCRIPTION: This roundtable discussion will provide an in-depth review of the natural cycle frozen embryo transfer (NC-FET). We will discuss patient selection, protocols, success rates, logistical considerations and key differences between NC-FET and programmed FET.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Understand protocol options for NC-FET
2. Compare outcomes and evidence for NC-FET and programmed FET
3. Review strategies and considerations for NC-FET in clinical practice