Background

- Current worldwide infertility rate is approximately 9%, with up to one in four couples experiencing infertility problems.
- Estimated 48.5 million infertile couples.
- Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) refers to advanced fertility treatments such as in vitro fertilization (IVF).
- Europe is the leader of ART at ~55% of all worldwide cycles.
- ~1,500 IVF cycles per million habitants required to meet utilization needs, only one third of countries meet goal.
- Increasing rates of ART show high utilization discrepancies between countries.
- Cross border reproductive care is the growing phenomenon that applies to persons who are seeking infertility treatment in another country.

Purpose

To identify factors that lead to discrepancies of utilization of artificial reproductive technology (ART) worldwide and understand the impacts liberal and strict country regulations have on cross border care and overall reproductive health and infertility rates.

Methods

- Literature search for global infertility, assistive reproductive technology and cross border care.
- Data gathered and analyzed.
- Visual graphs for 18 countries created for number of ART cycles, pregnancy rates and ART utilization based on population.
- Laws and regulations for ART of each country researched and compared to ART utilization and outgoing cross border care rates.

Conclusions

- Major factors for use of ART is cost, public financing and individual country legislation.
- Factors regulated by country legislation include: marital status, age of female and male, number of cycles allowed and sexual orientation.
- The top “outgoing” countries have strict regulations and seek care at the top “incoming” countries with liberal regulations.
- Too much cross border care/medical tourism is higher wait lists.
- The growing phenomenon of cross border reproductive care highlights the problem with infertility throughout the world.
- The utilization of ART has not met the growth in technology for infertility treatment and poses a threat to the population of infertile persons.
- The data should continue to be examined to fully determine the factors contributing to the increase in cross border care to further help the utilization of ART.

References