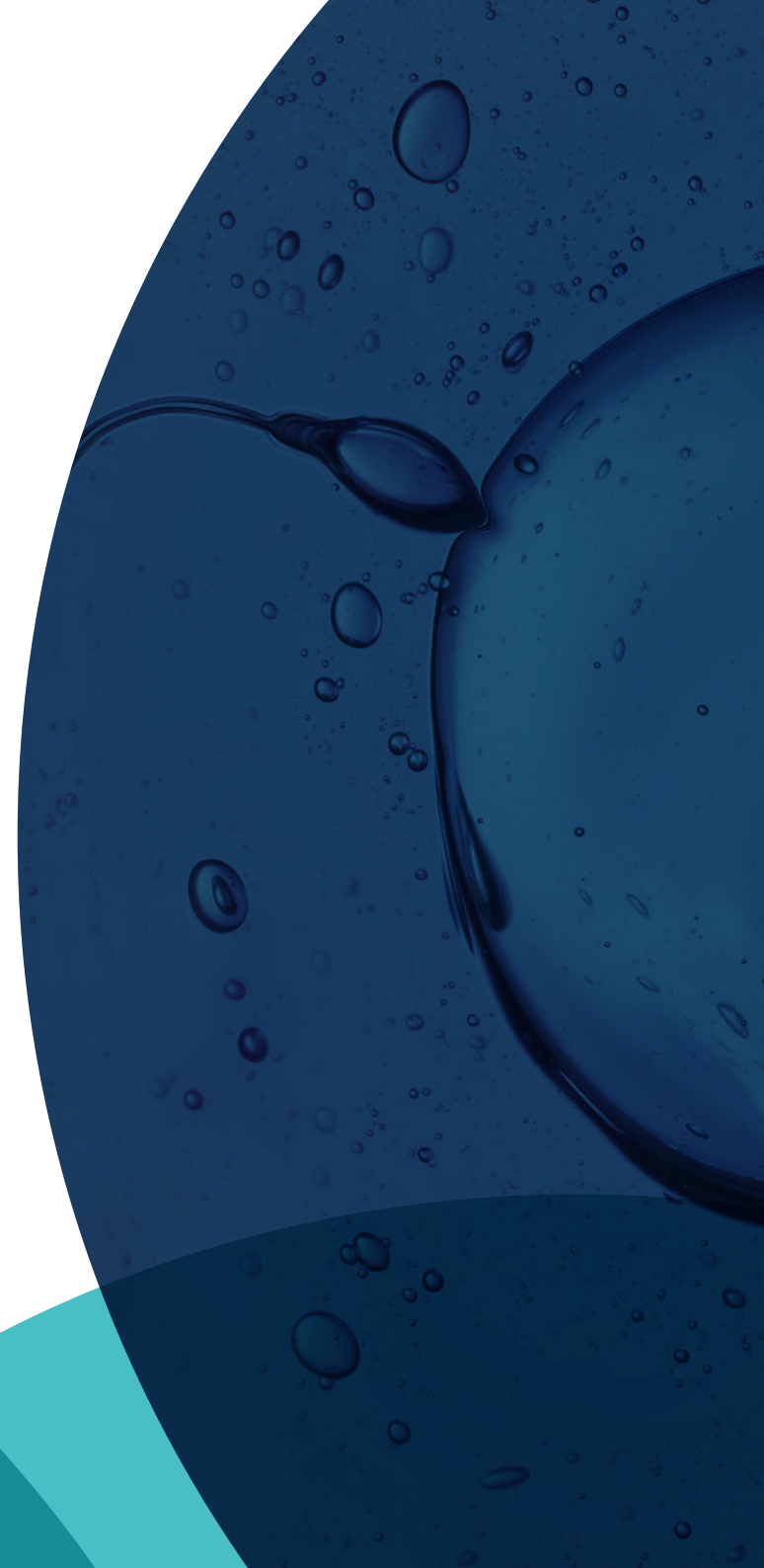


# Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

What should infertility research focus on next?

Our partnership has brought together healthcare professionals, people with fertility problems, and others to set future priorities for infertility research.



## Chairs



**Dr James M. N. Duffy**

Balliol College, University of Oxford,  
United Kingdom



**Prof. Cindy Farquhar**

Cochrane Gynaecology and Fertility,  
University of Auckland, New Zealand

## Steering Group

**G. David Adamson**

ARC Fertility, United States

**Siladitya Bhattacharya**

University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom  
Human Reproduction Open

**Sohinee Bhattacharya**

University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom

**Magdalena Bofill**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Kate Brian**

Women's Voices, Royal College of  
Obstetricians and Gynaecologists,  
United Kingdom

**Barbara Collura**

RESOLVE: The National Infertility  
Association, United States

**Cate Curtis**

Fertility NZ, New Zealand  
University of Waikato, New Zealand

**Leona Dann**

Health Quality and Safety Commission,  
New Zealand

**Johannes L.H. Evers**

University Medical Centre Maastricht,  
The Netherlands  
Human Reproduction

**Roy G. Farquharson**

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust,  
United Kingdom

**Anita Fincham**

Fertility Europe, Poland

**Sebastian Franik**

Münster University Hospital, Germany

**Linda C. Giudice**

International Federation of Fertility Societies

**Elizabeth Glanville**

Auckland District Health Board,  
New Zealand

**Martha Hickey**

University of Melbourne, Australia

**Andrew Horne**

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

**M. Louise Hull**

University of Adelaide, Australia

**Neil P. Johnson**

University of Adelaide, Australia

**Vanessa Jordan**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Yakoub Khalaf**

Kings College London, United Kingdom

**José Knijnenburg**

Freya, The Netherlands

**Richard S. Legro**

Penn State College of Medicine,  
United States

**Sarah Lensen**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Jeanette MacKenzie**

Fertility Plus, New Zealand

**Ben W. Mol**

Monash University, Australia

**Dean Morbeck**

Fertility Associates, New Zealand

**Helen Nagels**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Ernst H.Y. Ng**

University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

**Craig Niederberger**

University of Illinois at Chicago,  
United States  
Fertility and Sterility

**Anne-Sophie Otter**

Osakidetza OSI, Spain

**Lucian Puscasiu**

University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science  
and Technology Targu Mures, Romania

**Satu Rautakallio-Hokkanen**

Fertility Europe, Finland

**Sjoerd Repping**

Amsterdam University Medical Centers,  
The Netherlands

**Lynn Sadler**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Marian Showell**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Jane Stewart**

British Fertility Society, United Kingdom

**Annika Strandell**

Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Sweden

**Catherine Strawbridge**

Fertility Network UK, United Kingdom

**Helen L. Torrance**

University Medical Centre Utrecht,  
The Netherlands

**Andy Vail**

University of Manchester,  
United Kingdom

**Melissa Vercoe**

University of Auckland, New Zealand

**Thị Ngọc Lan Vương**

University of Medicine and Pharmacy at  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

**Alex Y. Wang**

University of Technology Sydney, Australia

**Rui Wang**

University of Adelaide, Australia

**Madelon van Wely**

Amsterdam University Medical Centers,  
The Netherlands

**Jack Wilkinson**

University of Manchester, United Kingdom

**Karina Wong**

Fertility NZ, New Zealand

**Tze Yoong Wong**

Auckland District Health Board,  
New Zealand

**Mohamed A. Youssef**

Cairo University, Egypt

## Funders



## What should infertility research focus on next?

Reproductive medicine helps to assist people with fertility problems to become parents. Unfortunately, despite the escalation in research activity and an exponential rise in published research, many of the fundamental questions about the treatment of infertility remain. This is a barrier to improving the care people with fertility problems receive.

Our Priority Setting Partnership has brought healthcare professionals, people with fertility problems, and others together to set future priorities for infertility research. We have engaged in an open and transparent process, using robust consensus development methods advocated by the James Lind Alliance.

Over 700 people from 53 countries participated in our partnership. With their help we have prioritised the top ten research uncertainties for male infertility, female and unexplained infertility, medically assisted reproduction, and ethics, access, and organisation of care.

We anticipate that this prioritised list of research uncertainties, developed to specifically highlight the most pressing clinical needs as perceived by healthcare professionals, people with fertility problems, and others will help funding organisations and researchers to set their future research priorities.

We are drowning in research that is singularly lacking in impact. Our approach should ensure future research has the necessary reach and relevance to inform future clinical practice and improve patient outcomes.

### **Dr James M. N. Duffy**

Balliol College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

### **Prof. Cindy Farquhar**

Cochrane Gynaecology and Fertility,  
University of Auckland, New Zealand





## Our consensus building methods

### 01. Gathering research questions

We conducted an initial survey asking healthcare professionals, people with fertility problems, and others what questions they wanted future research to answer. We promoted the survey across our partner organisations and social media to ensure we reached a diverse range of people with different perspectives.

179 healthcare professionals, 153 people with fertility problems, and 56 others, from 40 countries, responded to the initial survey and submitted 423 potential research questions.

We also reviewed 14 clinical practice guidelines and 162 Cochrane systematic reviews and identified a further 236 potential research questions.

**179 healthcare professionals**

**153 people with fertility problems**

**56 others**

**40 countries**

### 02. Prioritising research questions

We conducted an interim prioritisation survey asking healthcare professionals, people with fertility problems, and others to prioritise a rationalised list of 231 research questions. The survey was promoted across our partner organisations and social media.

Survey respondents were asked to select their top five research questions for male infertility, female and unexplained infertility, medically assisted reproduction, and ethics, access, and organisation of care.

143 healthcare professionals, 119 people with fertility problems, and 55 others, from 43 countries, responded to the interim prioritisation survey. Based on their feedback, 15 research questions were prioritised for male infertility, female and unexplained infertility, medically assisted reproduction, and ethics, access, and organisation of care.

**143 healthcare professionals**

**119 people with fertility problems**

**55 others**

**43 countries**

## Our consensus building methods

### 03. Consensus development conference

Prioritised research questions were discussed in a consensus development conference held in Auckland, New Zealand.

Using the formal consensus development methods, 19 healthcare professionals, 14 people with fertility problems, and eight others, from 11 countries, prioritised the top ten research uncertainties for male infertility, female and unexplained infertility, medically assisted reproduction, and ethics, access, and organisation of care.

19 healthcare professionals

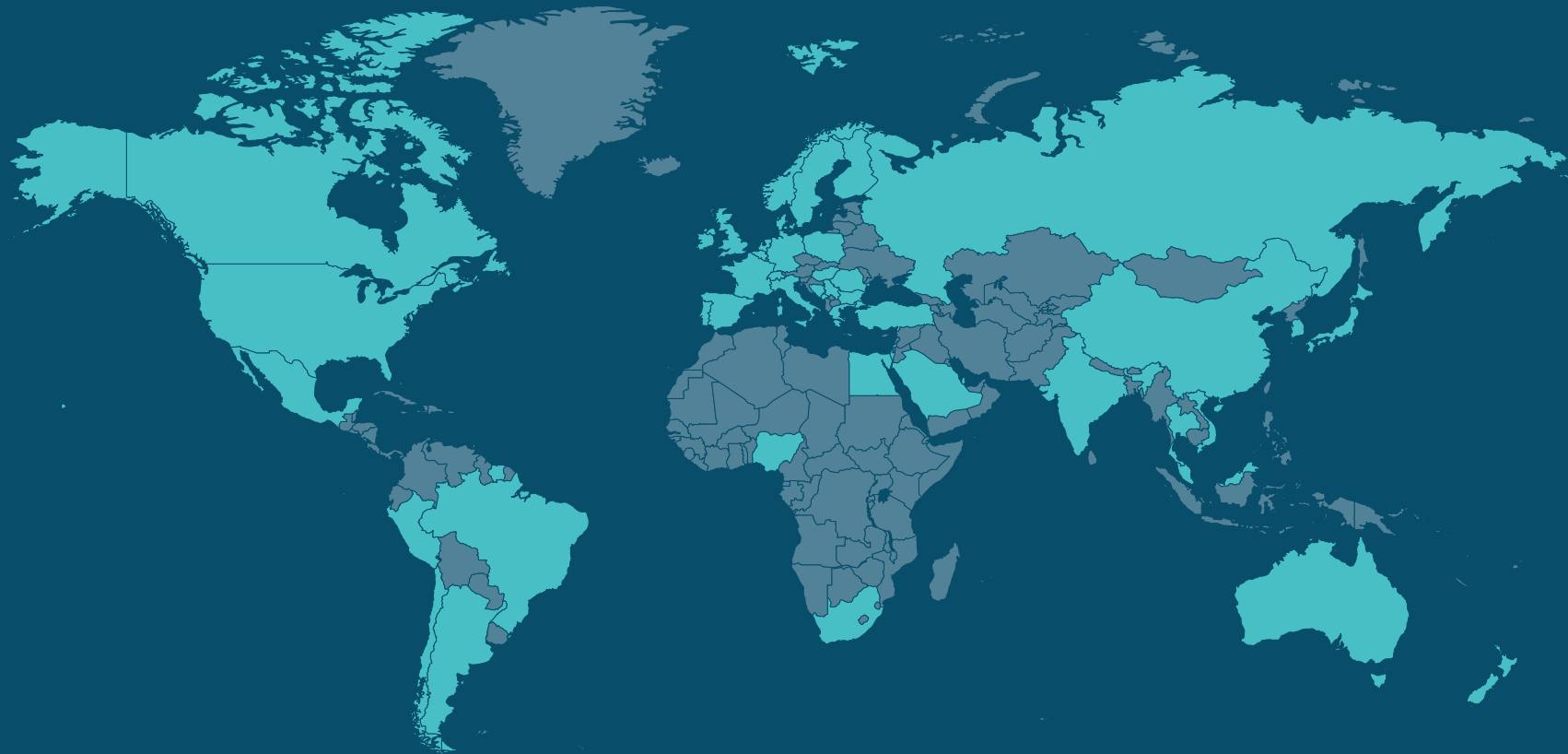
14 people with fertility problems

8 others

11 countries



## Our international reach



- Argentina
- Australia
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Brazil
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Denmark
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- India
- Iran
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Japan
- Malaysia
- Malta
- Mexico
- Montenegro
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Peru
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Romania
- Russia
- Saudi Arabia
- Serbia
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Suriname
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- The Netherlands
- Turkey
- Tuvalu
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Vietnam

## Top ten male infertility research uncertainties

**01**

Are sperm tests other than the World Health Organization parameters useful in evaluating male fertility?

**03**

Do environmental factors cause male infertility?

**05**

Can we improve surgical sperm extraction outcomes by using endocrine stimulatory protocols?

**09**

Does treating co-morbidities improve outcomes?

**07**

Does treating modifiable risk factors improve outcomes?

**02**

What is the emotional and psychological impacts of male infertility? Can addressing them improve outcomes?

**04**

Does treating specific causes of male infertility improve outcomes?

**06**

What modifiable risk factors cause male infertility?

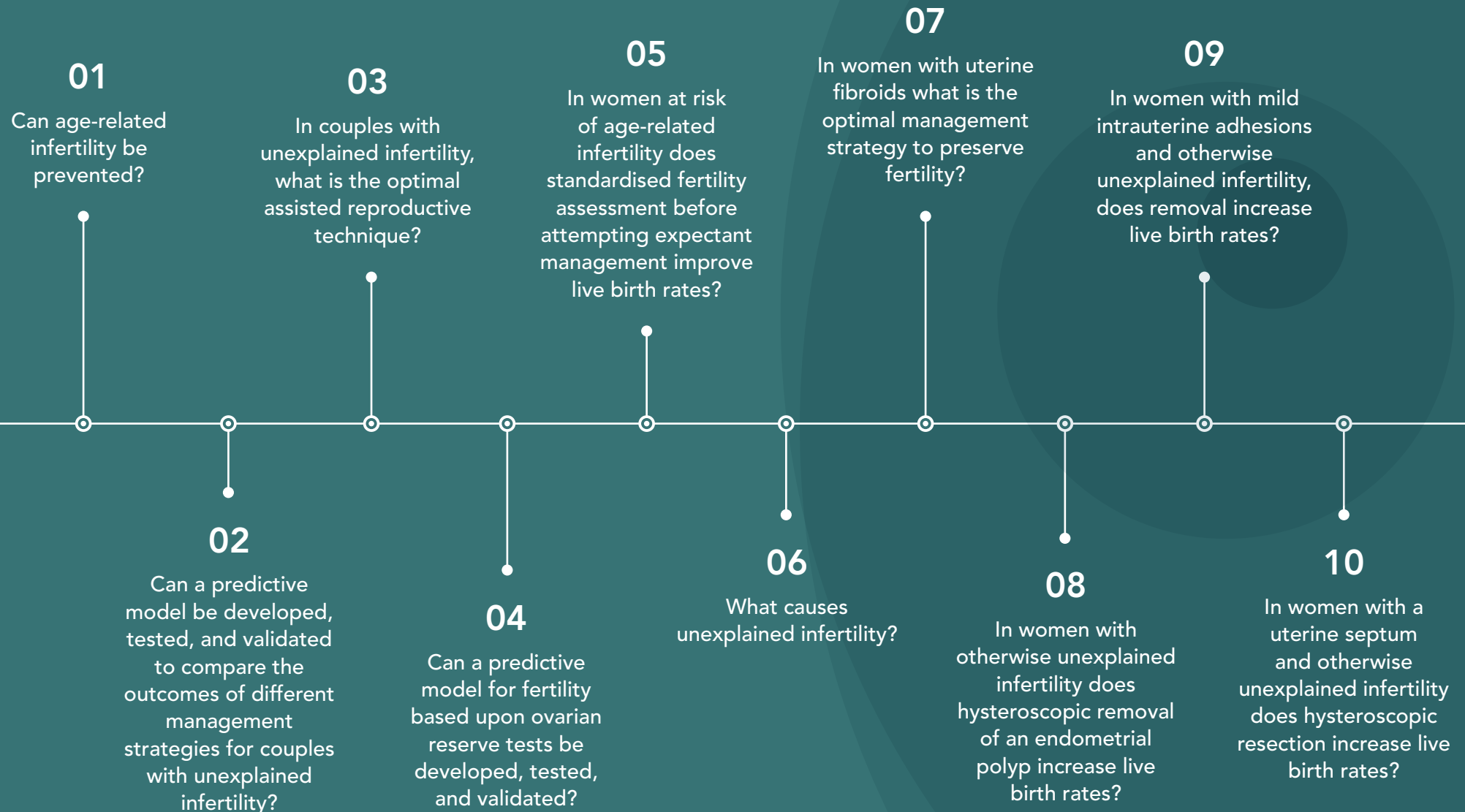
**08**

What co-morbidities are associated with infertility?

**10**

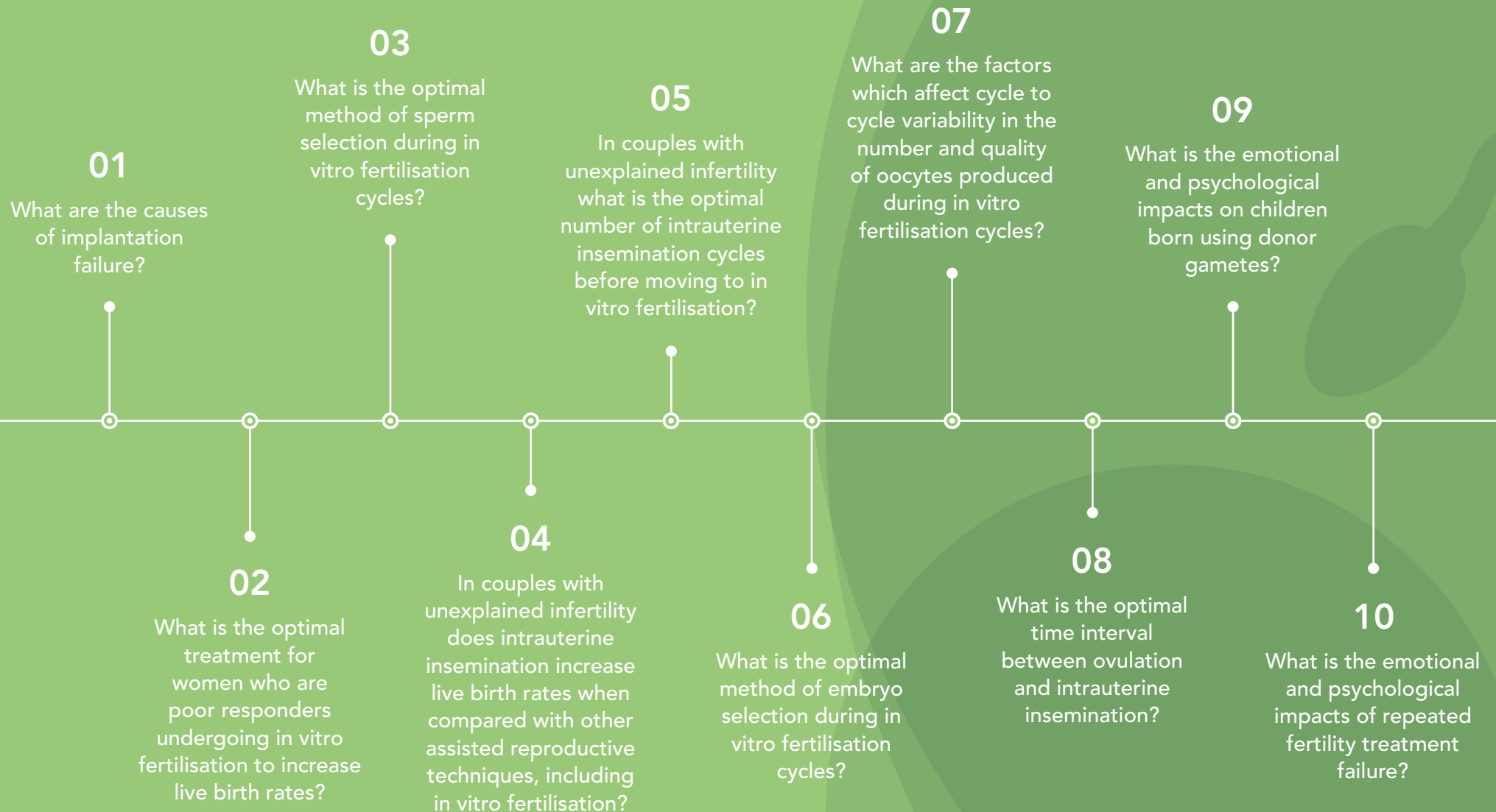
Are nutraceuticals useful in improving male reproductive potential? If so, which?

# Top ten female and unexplained infertility research uncertainties

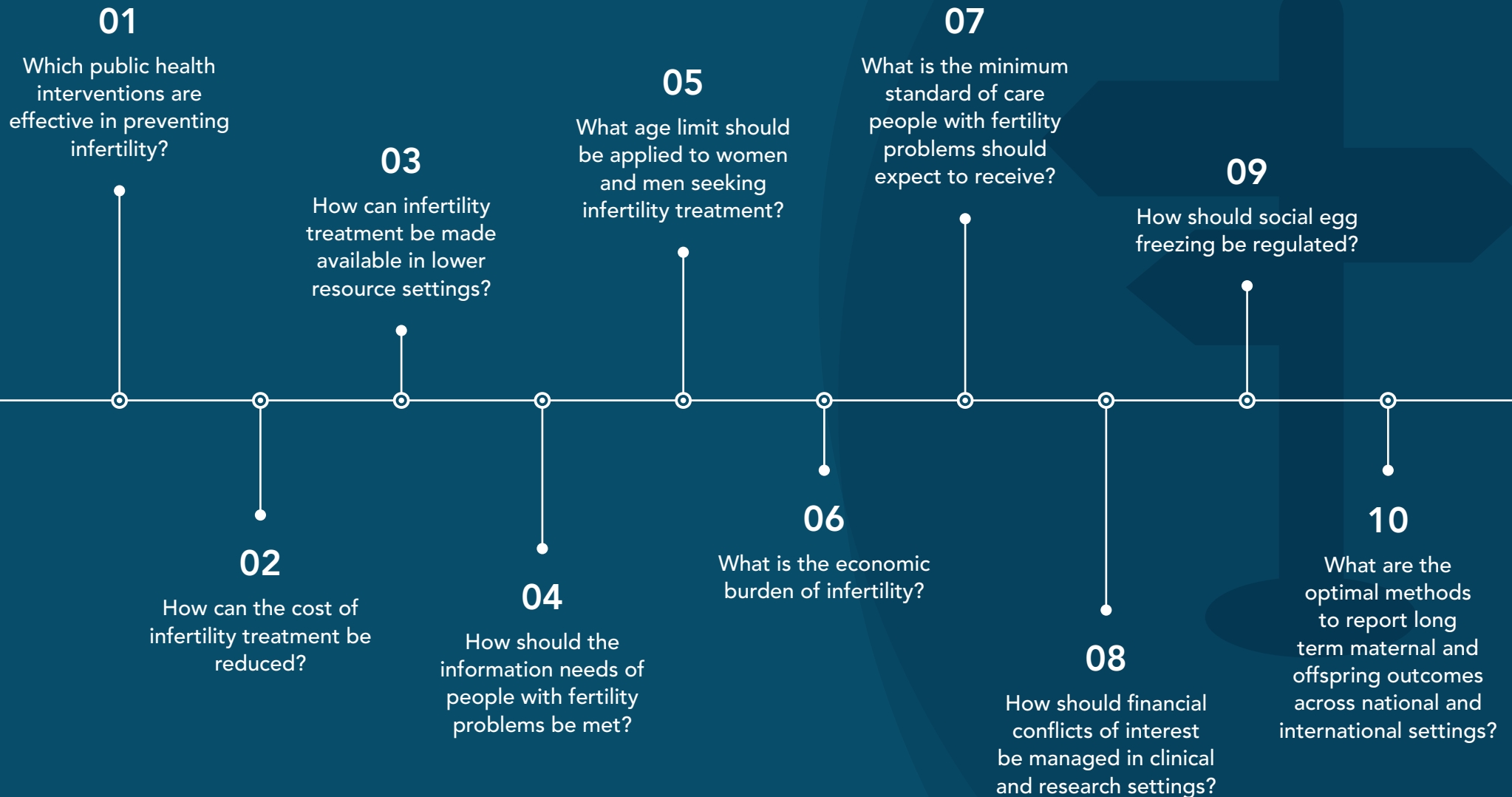




# Top ten medically assisted reproduction research uncertainties



# Top ten ethics, access, and organisation of care research uncertainties



## Social media tiles

Top 10 research priorities  
for male infertility

**4. Does treating specific  
causes of male infertility  
improve outcomes?**

 @FertilityTop10

Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

Top 10 research priorities for female  
and unexplained infertility

**1. Can age-related  
infertility be prevented?**

 @FertilityTop10

Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

Top 10 research priorities for  
medically assisted reproduction

**10. What is the emotional and  
psychological impacts of repeated  
fertility treatment failure?**

 @FertilityTop10

Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

Top 10 research priorities for ethics,  
access, and organisation of care

**2. How can the cost of  
infertility treatment  
be reduced?**

 @FertilityTop10

Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

# Priority Setting Partnership for Infertility

**Dr James M. N. Duffy**

Balliol College, University of Oxford,  
United Kingdom

james.duffy@phc.ox.ac.uk

@jamesmnduffy

**Prof. Cindy Farquhar**

Cochrane Gynaecology and Fertility,  
University of Auckland, New Zealand

c.farquhar@auckland.ac.nz

@cindyfarquhar

@FertilityTop10