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External News - *Olivia Scholes, OMS III***Recommended Article: "Roe v Wade and the Threat to Fertility Care"**

In last month's issue of Obstetrics & Gynecology, physicians addressed the topic of IVF in light of the overturning of Roe v Wade. They state, "Defining 'personhood' with fertilization would subject human embryos to undue restrictions that lack scientific foundation and would render IVF both less successful and less safe.."

If embryonic loss has legal implications, physicians could be at risk when an individual fails to become pregnant after embryo transfer or when an embryo fails to survive the cryopreservation and warming process. Physicians could also be held liable when embryos arrest in the IVF laboratory, even though in nature this is a normal part of embryonic development." Secondaries are upon us in a few short weeks. We implore you to advocate locally and to vote for candidates that will legislate protection for fertility care. You can read the full article for free [HERE](#).

Internal News - *Miranda Willis, OMS II*

For the month of November, the SOMA's advocacy focus is Medical Ethics. While the SOMA has a large number of resolutions focused on medical ethics, this article will focus specifically on informed consent, both in general and regarding pelvic exams. If reading statistics regarding pelvic exams performed on surgical patients without consent makes you uncomfortable, the TLDR will cover the basics of the article! If you would like to learn about other resolutions on specific medical ethics topics, let us know.

In 2019, a resolution was put forth by students from University of New England COM, Arizona COM of Midwestern University and Chicago COM of Midwestern University titled "Education of Students and Faculty on Obtaining Informed Consent Before All Student and Patient Encounters." This resolution, which resolved that all COMs prepare students to obtain consent and expect their faculty to do the same, was the first SOMA resolution specifically regarding informed consent. Ultimately, this resolution was referred to the authors, but it was followed up the next year by resolution S-20-25, "SOMA Encourages the AOA to Adopt the Guideline of Specific Informed Consent for Sensitive Exams Under Anesthesia for Educational Purposes." S-20-25, which was written by a group of students from Kentucky COM, was approved by the SOMA House of Delegates and was presented to the AOA House of Delegates. In it, the authors presented data showing that a large majority of medical students had performed pelvic exams on anesthetized patients. The authors were able to find an study that showed evidence that more than 50% of women undergoing a surgical procedure would consent to a pelvic exam if asked prior to the surgery. The resolved statement of this resolution asked SOMA to encourage the AOA to require specific informed consent for sensitive exams performed for educational purposes. S-20-25 was presented to the AOA HOD as H207 in October of 2020. At this point, the resolution was referred back to the SOMA. The AOA Reference Committee supported the spirit of the resolution but believed that H223-A/19, a resolution submitted by the Maine Osteopathic Association in 2019. This resolution, which appears to be an edited version of the one submitted to the SOMA House the same year, asked the AOA to emphasize the importance of obtaining consent for OMT and/or physical contact interactions both in the learning environment and in actual practice.

The SOMA proved their desire to have a more specific resolution this past spring with resolution S-22-21, "Protective Measures Against the Performance of Pelvic Exams on Anesthetized Patients Without Informed Consent." Students from RVUCOM-SU resolved that the SOMA should conduct research to determine the incidence of pelvic exams being performed on anesthetized patients without informed consent in addition to working with their stakeholders and state medical societies to advocate for increased protections for patients. This resolution was passed by the SOMA house and opens the door for future resolutions to use the information obtained from the research conducted. While this is not a solution to the problem that members of the SOMA very clearly see and want to address, it does establish clear steps that can be taken for the advancement of student goals.

TLDR: The SOMA recognizes the need for informed consent for all medical procedures but specifically in relation to pelvic exams performed on anesthetized patients. Several resolutions have been created regarding this topic - most having done well in the SOMA HOD. The SOMA resolved in spring of 2020 to conduct research regarding the incidence of pelvic exams being performed on anesthetized patients without prior informed consent and agreed to work with stakeholders and state medical societies to increase protections for patients.

SOMA Member Spotlight - *Isabella Mazzei, OMS II*

Do you have a member of your SOMA chapter or know of a SOMA member at another school who has written an impactful resolution, met with lawmakers to make change, spoken out for political issues that impact the medical community or is otherwise politically involved?

Nominate them for SOMA Member spotlight so we can recognize their hard work!

Fill out the form below with their name and why we should feature them. We will reach out to them for an interview and feature them in an upcoming issues of this newsletter!

**NOMINATE AN
OUTSTANDING
SOMA MEMBER FOR
MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT [HERE](#)**

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