

ACTIVITY REPORT: PROFESSOR CHIARA BENEDETTO

MD, PhD, FCNGOF, FEBCOG, FRCOG, FACOG. FIGO Regional Trustee for Europe

Contribution to FIGO Governance, Administration, Strategies and Academic Activities

I became *FIGO Regional Trustee for Europe* on 10th October, 2023 at the FIGO World Congress in Paris. Since then I have fulfilled my duties by contributing to diverse issues related to FIGO strategies, administration, governance and budgets and took part in orientation/introduction meetings to share the President's Vision for FIGO, as well as on-line and in-person BOT meetings.

As a *Member of the FIGO Education, Communication and Advocacy Consortium (ECAC)*, I regularly attended meetings and contributed actively to the assessment of various Projects, Research Papers, Position Statements and Documents submitted by the FIGO Divisions and Committees.

Contributions as Ex-officio Trustee Member of the FIGO Women at Reproductive Age and Women at Menopausal Age Committees

Women at Reproductive Age Committee - I personally contributed to the preparation of the paper "*FIGO Preconception Checklist: Preconception Care for Mother and Baby*" published in the International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics, 2024;165:1-8.

I promoted the implementation of the FIGO Preconception Checklist for women desiring pregnancy in Europe and beyond.

As FIGO's core mission is to pro-actively reduce the ongoing high maternal death rate, and to improve newborn outcome, we discussed, together with Dr Eytan Barnea and the other members of the committee, the possibility of introducing a rapid triage method (P2L- Prep to Labor), which provides practical diagnostic/therapeutic decisive steps to address timely/safely labor.

Women at Menopausal Age Committee - I personally contributed to the preparation of the paper "*Counseling in menopausal women: How to address the benefits and risks of menopause hormone therapy. A FIGO position paper*," published in the International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics, 2024;164:516-30

I promoted a joint ongoing FIGO and IMS (International Menopause Society) Position Paper on "*Hormone Therapy in Women with Premature Ovarian Insufficiency or Early Menopause: it is time to think of a new paradigm for a healthy ageing*", aimed at reaching a global consensus on the rational of extending the use of specific MHT beyond the average age of menopause, i.e. 51 years, in women with no contraindications for MHT and premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) or Early Menopause. This extension may potentially decrease the negative impact POI has on the general, psychological and sexual quality of life, as well as on long-term bone, cardiovascular, metabolic and cognitive health.

I also promoted a joint ongoing FIGO and WHF Position Paper on "*Menopause Hormone Therapy in Women at high risk of Coronary Heart Disease*" aimed at developing a common "language" between Gynecologists and Cardiologists to help in making an individualized counselling of women at high risk of coronary heart disease during the menopausal transition and post-menopause as to the use of MHT. This will offer an opportunity to improve the quality of life for women with climacteric symptoms and hopefully reduce the long-term consequences of gonadal steroid deprivation, through a selective use of specific types of MHT which do not carry an increased risk of thrombosis.

Contributions to the FIGO Mission and Vision in Europe and beyond

FIGO's Mission of elevating the status of women and girls' health, reducing disparities in health care for women and girls and advancing the science and practice of obstetrics and

gynaecology through education, global research, advocacy and capacity building is also the core of the European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (EBCOG). Moreover, currently the EBCOG President is the President Elect of FIGO, and therefore, the activities of FIGO have been easily integrated with those of EBCOG and vice versa.

I personally promoted several activities including Webinars, Congress Lectures, events for public engagement and social media projects, aimed at raising awareness on the pivotal importance of implementing preconception care for women at reproductive age and individualised counselling on MHT during the menopausal transition and the post-menopausal age. These actions may ultimately help to increase the health-span of women and are expected to have an overall positive individual and socio-economic impact.

Collaboration with other Institutions

I was involved with Professor Fionnuala McAuliffe in the WHO Consultation: Reframing care and services to improve preconception health, 8 May 2024, to present the FIGO: Preconception and Nutrition Checklists.

I collaborated in a Joint position statement: “*Substandard and disrespectful care in labour - because words matter*” prepared by the European Association of Perinatal Medicine (EAPM), EBCOG and the European Midwives Association (EMA), which was published in the Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol 2024;296:205-7.

I was contacted by Dr. Gwanyama Noella, General Consultant at the Regional Hospital Bamenda, Cameroon asking for support in the implementation of the FIGO “*Checklist on preconception care*” in Cameroon, to improve maternal and child health, through the training/involvement of Civil Society Organizations in the NW Cameroon Region. This project is under consideration.

I collaborated, together with Professors Fionnuala McAuliffe, Hema Divakar and Bo Jacobsson, in a project of the Thalassaemia International Federation, to develop, “*Guidelines on the management of Thalassaemia*” for dissemination, which was concluded. Another collaboration is ongoing with Dr Vani Sethi who works for the advancement of adolescent, preconception and maternal nutrition policies and programmes in the South Asia Region, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Kathmandu. The aim is to bridge the knowledge gap on preconception nutrition in South Asia thorough a series of 4 research papers: The first paper on *Preconception malnutrition among women and girls in south Asia: prevalence, determinants, and association with pregnancy and birth outcomes* was published in the Lancet Regional Health South East Asia, in April 2025;36:100573.

International Congresses and Webinar Activities related to FIGO

I was faculty at the 66th the All India Congress of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (AICOG) in Hyderabad (6-10 Jan 2024) for the EBCOG Session, speaking on “*Counseling in Menopausal Women: Benefits and Risks- of MHT - Global perspective*” and at the 67th AICOG Congress in Mumbai (8-12 Jan 2024) for the FIGO Session, speaking on “*Raising Awareness of Preconception Care*”.

I was Chief Guest at MOGS (The Mumbai Obstetric & Gynecological Society) Presidential Webinar on Menopause, FIGO Committee Session, speaking on “*Menopausal Hormone Therapy: Benefits and Risks*” (1 August 2024).

I organised and ran an online FIGO Webinar for the European Region, on 26 March 2025, “*Promoting healthy ageing - Best practices in menopausal care*” aimed at providing a comprehensive, evidence-based guidance to improve health and well-being during menopause.

I am a member of the Scientific Committee for the Frankfurt 5-7 June 29th European Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, which will also be an occasion for FIGO Members to gather together and share knowledge and visions.