Meeting report for the 8th meeting of the International Network of Young Researchers in Male Fertility (INYRMF) in Florence, Italy

The 8th international meeting of INYRMF was held this year in May 14th – 16th 2014 in Florence, Italy. This year, 55 participants from 15 countries attended our meeting and actively contributed by asking questions and discussing the excellent talks by the invited speakers. This year, we have slightly changed the meeting format and in addition to 3 invited speakers from the field of reproductive medicine and biology, the young researcher award lecture and a poster session with 16 posters, 16 abstracts from participating young scientists were chosen for oral presentation. Furthermore, two workshops on new techniques from the field were enclosed in the programme.

In the first session on the sex chromosomes, Prof. Paolo Francalacci (University of Sassari, Italy) gave a stimulating lecture on the Y chromosome with special focus on the male-specific portion of the Y chromosome and how it can clarify the origins of the contemporary populations. This lecture was followed by Prof. Csilla Krausz (University of Florence, Italy) who enlightened us about copy number variations (CNVs) with emphasis on X-linked CNVs in oligozoospermia. Dr. Willy Baarends (University of Rotterdam, The Netherlands) invited us on a journey into male meiosis and formation of XY bodies in our second session.

The 16 selected oral presentations from young researchers covered topics from epigenetic changes in cultured human germ line stem cells to the role of Slc26 proteins in sperm maturation and capacitation and mixtures effects of endocrine disrupting chemicals. Both during the presentations and the poster session the participants had fruitful discussions with sharing of experience and establishment of new networks.

This year our Young Researcher Award was awarded to Dr. Frédéric Chalmel (IRSET, France). Dr. Chalmel is occupied at the border between proteomics and transcriptomics and he gave a lecture entitled: "Integrative genomics and mammalian spermatogenesis". With this lecture he gave us a glimpse of the complex and highly coordinated molecular networks underlying normal and pathological spermatogenesis.

The final part of our programme consisted of two workshops. In the first workshop Dr. Lodovico Parmegiani (IVF laboratory director, GynePro Medical Centers, Bologna, Italy) shared his personal experience with two commercial available ready-to-use systems that allows the IVF laboratories to select the best spermatozoa for ICSI. In the second workshop Dr. Ruth Kläver from Qiagen (Germany) showed us how pyrosequencing can be a useful tool in andrology. Especially, Dr. Kläver shared data from her own work with pyrosequencing and analysis of DNA methylation in spermatozoa.

As board of INYRMF we would like to thank our invited speakers, and all participants for attending the meeting. Also, we wish to thank our sponsors European Academy of Andrology (EAA), International Society of Andrology (ISA), Società Italiana di Andrologia e Medicina della Sessualità (SIAMS), Andrological Sciences Onlus (Florence, Italy), and Fundació Puigvert (Barcelona, Spain) for supporting our 8th meeting in Florence, Italy.