



FIGO

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
OF
GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS

FIGO reaffirms commitment: 'International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women' (25 November 2016)

The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) reaffirms its commitment to addressing violence against women.

In 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched UNiTE to End Violence against Women - a campaign aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls in all parts of the world. Governments, civil society, women's organisations, young people, the private sector, the media and the entire UN system are encouraged to work together to address the global pandemic of violence against women and girls.

One in 3 (35 per cent) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime, according to estimates published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2013*. Globally, as many as 38 per cent of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner*.

Violence is naturally a major risk factor for women's ill health, accounting for a large proportion of the burden of disability and death among women of reproductive age. It is associated with a higher risk of unwanted pregnancies, abortions, sexually transmitted infections, (including HIV), depression, anxiety, alcohol use disorders, and chronic pain syndromes, including chronic pelvic pain. Intimate partner violence often persists or can even start during pregnancy and is associated with premature birth, miscarriage and low birth-weight babies.*

FIGO is the only organisation that brings together professional societies of obstetricians and gynecologists on a global basis. Its vision is for women of the world to achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. FIGO recognises the magnitude of the problem of violence against women, and has recently established a dedicated Working Group on Violence against Women, which includes stakeholders from the United Nations agencies working in the field. FIGO recognises that an encounter with a supportive and empathetic healthcare provider who can respond appropriately can be a turning point for women in the path towards healing and recovery.

As part of its ongoing work, FIGO has surveyed its Member Societies worldwide on what each Member's country is doing to combat the problem of gender violence. Obstetricians and gynecologists should be aware of violence and its impact on women's health and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and provide, as a minimum, the first-line response and referral to specialised services where they exist.

Sources/resources:

- <http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/about.shtml>

- [*http://www.who.int/topics/gender_based_violence/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/gender_based_violence/en/)
- Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf
- The FIGO Committee for the Ethical Aspects of Human Reproduction and Women's Health: 'Ethical Issues in Obstetrics and Gynecology' (October 2015)

<http://figo.org/sites/default/files/uploads/wg-publications/ethics/FIGO%20Ethical%20Issues%202015.pdf4893.pdf>