



RABBI GIDEON

**Machon Puah for Fertility and
Gynecology in Accordance with Halacha**

WEITZMAN

The Profile of a Supervisor

Last time we explained the need for halachic supervision in fertility treatment and the halachic rationale for employing women as supervisors.

HOW DO YOU SELECT YOUR SUPERVISORS?

The clinics generally work at hours that may be inconvenient for many people, such as early morning, Friday afternoon, Purim, Chol Hamoed etc. The women must be willing and able to work at such hours. Therefore, it is not a job for women with young children. The women must live in reasonably close proximity to the laboratories and be able to get to work without being caught in traffic. A supervisor cannot call up and say that she will be late since the traffic is heavy. The treatment must be performed at the set time, as there are patients who are waiting to be treated next.

The laboratories are usually quite small and the embryologists work under great pressure and with great precision. The supervisor must be able to work under such conditions, being able to observe all that is going on throughout the procedure, without being intrusive or upsetting the workflow. The embryologists cannot work if someone is talking with them, asking

them questions, or disturbing their work. The supervisor must be able to be present without interrupting the embryologist, while respecting their work.

MUST THE SUPERVISOR HAVE A SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND?

The truth is that we prefer someone with no science background at all. The reason is that the supervisor's job is to observe the process and ensure that there was no human error. She does not have to understand the science of the procedure, or comment on the efficacy of one procedure versus another. Neither should she compare one clinic to another, and share information, such as "But in another hospital, they do it this way..." Sometimes, a person with a scientific training will be concerned with the science of the treatment, and this will both adversely affect her ability to simply observe, and may disturb the embryologist who cannot answer all her questions and explain why and what she is doing.

While some people will argue with this approach, it is born out of our many years of experience with numerous different clinics and many supervisors worldwide.

We must, of course, train the supervisors in the relevant medical procedures. Otherwise, they are incapable of supervising the treatments.

More on this next time. ■