

IUGA comments on European Commission report regarding mesh

In early-June the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) released for public consultation a preliminary opinion on, 'The safety of surgical meshes used in urogynaecological surgery'. IUGA President, Bob Freeman, announced this at the annual meeting in Nice and, noting the importance of the issue, suggested that all those interested in the issue read the report and provide their feedback to the committee. The report is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consultations/public_consultations/scenihr_consultation_27_en.htm

The IUGA Board tasked a working group of Mark Slack, Jan Deprest and Willy Davila to draft a response from the association. This commentary was reviewed and approved by the IUGA Board and submitted to SCENIHR in the last week. Highlights of the commentary are:

- Expressed surprise that the committee had not made any recommendations for the methods of introduction of new devices or operations;
- Endorsed SCENIHR's recommendations that there should be more effort made to do a risk assessment of patients ahead of the placement of mesh;
- Agreed with the recommendation that the consenting process needs to be more robust;
- Stated it was inappropriate to rely too highly on the Amid classification which no longer covers all the available grafts;
- Suggested that it is invalid to recommend Type I polypropylene above all others for vaginal repair;
- Expressed concern about recommending polyester mesh as it was felt there were both basic science and clinical reasons why this was not a suitable material;
- Noted the report failed to consider new materials such as polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) or hybrid materials such as poliglecaprone or titanium covered mesh.

A full copy of the executive summary of the commentary is available [here](#). IUGA will continue to keep its members and others in the urogynecological field informed regarding the development of SCENIHR's opinion and will continue to interact with the committee.