

SABS tackles declining male fertility in sub-Saharan Africa

The global market for male semen analysis is projected to reach \$1.49bn by 2031. Studies in sub-Saharan Africa reveal declining semen quality, contributing to 40% of infertility cases in South Africa.



Source: Supplied. Lungelo Ntobongwana, acting chief officer of the SABS.

To this end, SABS has adopted ISO 23162, a standard for semen examination, aiding clinics in aligning with international practices, improving diagnoses, and treatment strategies. Accredited labs meeting SANS 23162 can assure patients of reliable results, potentially encouraging more clinics to conduct semen analysis.

ISO 23162 – Basic semen examination – specification and test method - is a document that provides the specifications that are applicable to the entire process of basic manual semen examination and for sample preparation for Computer-Aided Sperm Analysis.

As an adopted standard, SANS 23162 will enable medical laboratories and fertility clinics to align with international specifications and approaches.

The standard supports the requirements to facilitate any laboratory seeking accreditation for human semen examination. Clinically this would not only support improved diagnoses but provide more objective grounds for choosing between possible management strategies or alternative treatment modalities.

Furthermore, to support the evaluation and validation of new methods to improve the diagnosis and treatment of infertility, these standardised techniques can serve as reference methods.

Boosting confidence through standardisation

“A technical standard based on evidence and global consensus has the potential to reduce costs for consumers as procedures, test methods, sample treatment and collection are documented with the intent of creating reliable and repeatable results.

“Clinical laboratories that meet the specifications of SANS 23162 can now apply for accreditation, providing additional assurance to patients,” says Lungelo Ntobongwana, acting chief officer of the SABS.

Ntobongwana explains that SANS 23162 has the potential to encourage more clinics to undertake semen analysis, as the standard provides a blueprint for clinical operation and the opportunity for accreditation.

SANS 23162 can be purchased via the SABS website.

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