

# QUALITY CHARTER

## CENTER FOR FETAL DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPY UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH

The Center for Fetal Diagnosis and Therapy at the University of Zurich strives to meet the highest quality standards in all areas of diagnostics, treatment, ethics, conduct towards and communication with patients and their families, and in the assessment and publication of scientific data.

As part of this, we have developed a binding code of conduct that covers the above-mentioned points:

### **1. Teamwork**

Due to its interdisciplinary complexity, prenatal medicine always requires an interdisciplinary team consisting of the core medical staff, obstetricians, fetal surgeons/pediatric surgeons, perinatologists and neonatologists, medical geneticists, anesthesiologists and image diagnostics specialists. Other medical experts are consulted if needed.

The team also includes nursing staff, technical operation assistants, midwives, and two coordination experts.

Cooperation between team members revolves around the patient, is competency-based, respectful and trusting.

### **2. Training and experience of the team members**

Prenatal medicine is a new and therefore highly specialized medical discipline, as it must provide care for two inseparably joined patients: the mother and her unborn child. The education and further training of our team members from all professional groups must accommodate these unique circumstances, which are given the highest priority. Decisions and actions always demand responsibility on the part of the best trained and most experienced team members, as only in this way is it possible to meet the quality requirements sufficiently.

### **3. Standard Operative Procedure (SOP)**

Wherever possible, we have a standard operative procedure in place for diagnostic, therapeutic, supportive and all other activities, as this allows proven quality standards to be upheld and further improved.

### **4. Evidence-based approach**

As far as possible, our reasoning and actions are based on the best scientific evidence available, which we review on a regular basis. This practice also facilitates quality assurance and improvement.

### **5. Partnerships and collaborations**

Because fetal-interventional and fetal-surgical cases are highly complex and relatively uncommon, we maintain partnerships and collaborate with the world's most important centers for fetal diagnostics and treatment. This active interchange is extremely fruitful in terms of new findings and increased experience.

### **6. Transparency, truthfulness and compliance with the highest scientific and ethical quality standards**

The innovative methods in the field of cutting-edge medicine used at our center must comply with the highest scientific, medical and ethical standards.

This includes the provision of continuous, objective, accurate and complete information to patients (and family members while observing medical confidentiality) and the directly involved team members. For surgical procedures and interventions, informed consent in writing must be provided after the patient has been fully informed.

It is also essential to collect relevant data in a standardized and thus scientifically viable form in order to conduct mandatory scientific studies concerning the efficacy, appropriateness, sustainability and economic viability. This also includes a quality assurance comparison with data from other centers. These studies must be presented in a timely fashion to a critical audience of experts at conferences, and published in scientific journals in which they are subjected to professional scrutiny.

Ultimately, it is a medical and ethical imperative to continuously improve successful or promising practices and leave less effective practices behind.

## 7. Financial resources

In Switzerland, health insurance generally covers the costs of fetal surgery. Costs incurred after the child's birth are borne by invalidity insurance (*Invalidenversicherung*).

For patients from EU countries, in most cases an assumption of costs or at least a cost sharing arrangement can be reached.

For patients from outside Europe, the financial situation must be assessed in each case.

Our team does everything to ensure that a well-founded medical and parental/maternal decision for fetal surgery is not jeopardized by financial problems. We have access to the FetOpera fund, which can provide assistance in cases of financial hardship.

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