



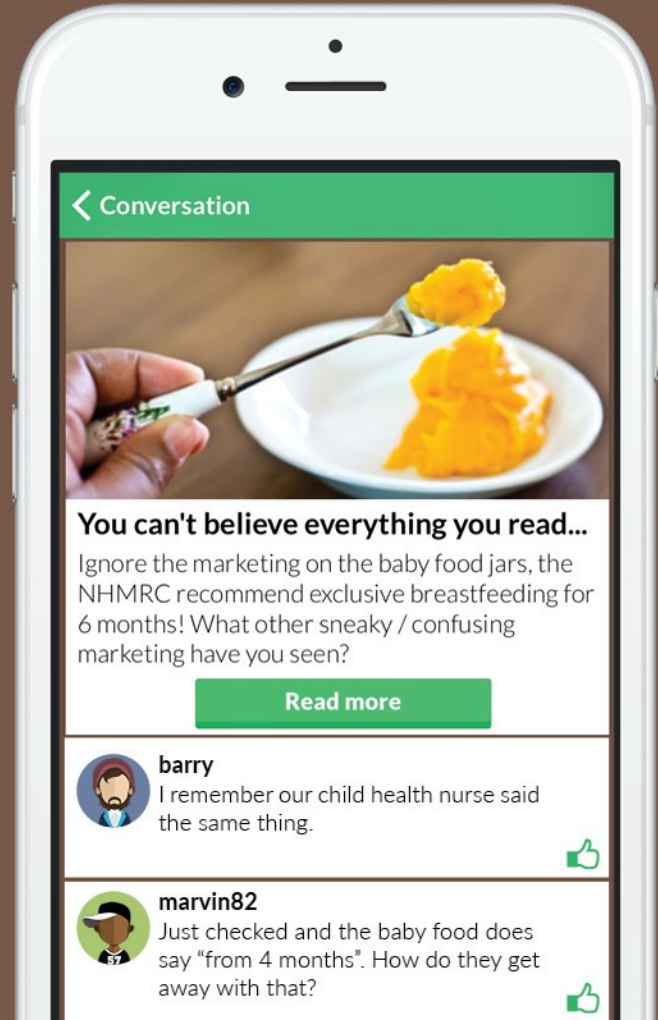
Using mobile technology to reach and engage fathers during the perinatal period: The Milk Man mobile app.

Dr Becky White

Professor Jane Scott, Professor Sharyn Burns, Dr Roslyn Giglia



A breastfeeding app, for men...



Fathers role in breastfeeding



Fathers influence initiation and duration



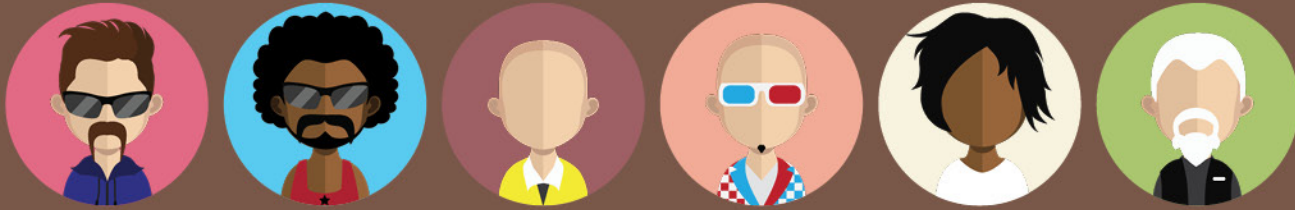
Strong evidence, repeated overtime in Australia



Increasing focus of intervention



Factors that influence support



Supporting dads

- Social support
- Help overcoming barriers
- Empowerment
- Knowledge / information

Social support and mental health

- Increased social support can positively benefit mental and physical health.
- Increasingly, online health communities (OHCs) are being investigated as forms of social support.
- Social support can have a buffering effect on parental stress.

Fathers are important

- 1 in 7 new dads experiences poor mental health.
- Good paternal mental health is protective factor for both infant development and maternal mental health.
- Fathers are important supports for breastfeeding.
- Fathers can feel isolated and that antenatal education is not inclusive of them.
- In the perinatal period, fathers highly value social support, and peer support in particular.

Mental health promotion

- Staying mentally healthy is important preventative measure
- Important anytime, and particularly over perinatal period.
- Act Belong Commit



**KEEPING MENTALLY
HEALTHY**

A Guide For New Dads



Mobile technology

- Smartphone ownership ubiquitous
- Access at users own time and space
- Anonymity may facilitate engagement
- Connect people over distance

PIFI Study Overview

Aim:

To design, deliver and evaluate 3 interventions of differing intensity and duration targeted at couples but channelled through the male partner.

Building on lessons learned in FIFI

Objective

To increase the duration of breastfeeding among new parents in Perth

To increase the duration of exclusive breastfeeding

To reduce the premature introduction of solids

Participants (n=1428)

Couples attending antenatal classes

Three public hospitals

- Osborne Park
- Armadale-Kelmscott
- KEMH

Three private hospitals

- SJoG Subiaco
- SJoG Murdoch
- SJoG Mount Lawley

PIFI - Four arm, factorial RCT

		Milk Man app - social support intervention	
		No	Yes
Male facilitated antenatal session	No	Control (C)	Medium 2 (M2)
	Yes	Medium 1 (M1)	High (HI)



The idea

Developing the app



Formative

- Focus groups with men
- Consultative sessions with stakeholders



Iterative

- User testing
- Beta testing

Focus groups

Key messages

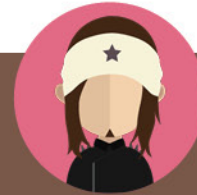
Mobile usage
throughout day



Short, simple info with
links to further reading



Practical steps
to help



Bullet points are good,
checklists are good



Notifications are good,
but be judicious



Light hearted,
funny approach



Stakeholders

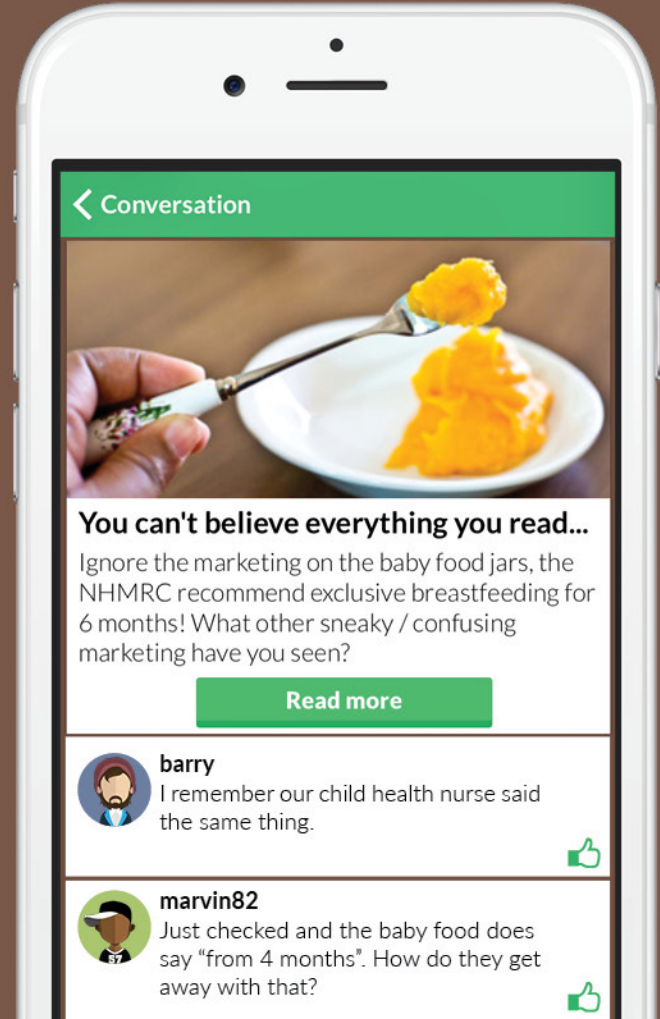


Keep content lighthearted and informative, because otherwise you'll lose them, and they won't come back if they're finding it too heavy and judgemental.



App will be great as all the info is in one place so they know where to go – that's what people want.

A breastfeeding app, for men...



Conversation



Ch..ch..ch..changes

Things have changed since your dad was a new parent. What do you think you'll do differently to your old man?

Read more



JaredMcNamar

Have a bigger television.

5 votes



ChrisReid

My old mans pretty cool. I reckon he'll be a softie of a grandad but.



Troubleshooting



Engorgement

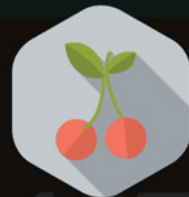
While women often get very full, heavy breasts when their milk is first coming in, this is normal and won't affect feeding as there is a normal flow of milk. Engorgement is when there is a build-up of milk, blood and other fluids in the breast, leading to a reduction in the flow of milk from the breast

Engorgement is exactly as it sounds, the breasts may become larger, swollen and sore, and the nipples flat, making feeding difficult. To prevent engorgement try:

- Feeding your baby on demand, for as long as he wants



barry



127

Popped the duck

Made your first comment on a post. You've popped the duck. Broke the cherry. Whatever the metaphor, you're under way.

ACHIEVED





Milk Man Usage



583 users (80%)



4580 poll answers

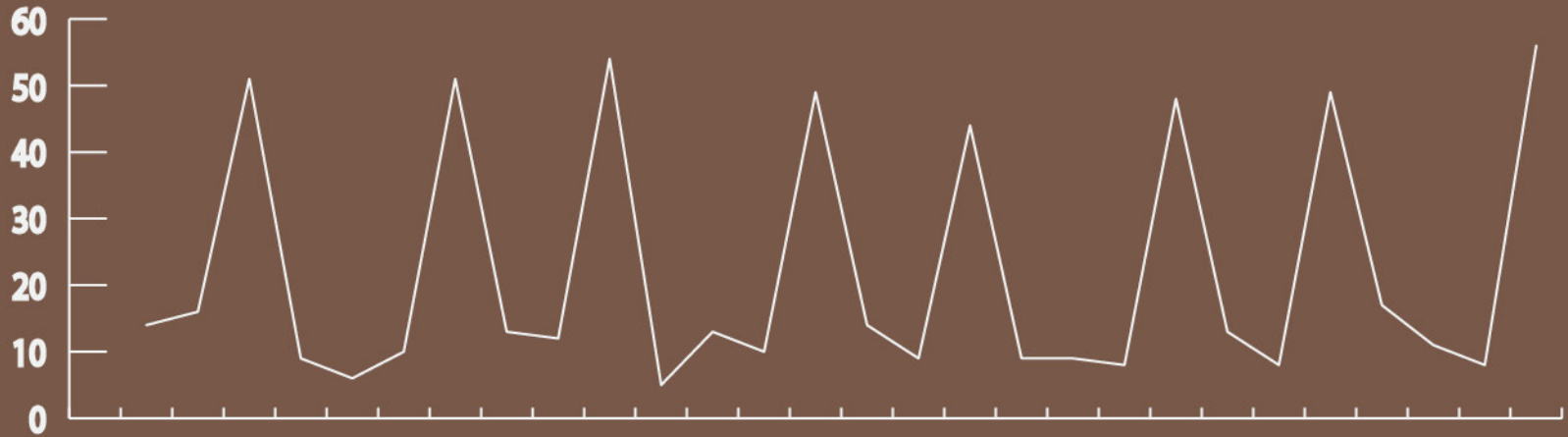


1497 topic responses



6623 library articles read (avg 11 per user)

Daily app usage



Unique days app opened over time



User perspectives

Library

It's helpful to have information at your fingertips.



Wide range of information, suggestions and opinions. Humorous polls.

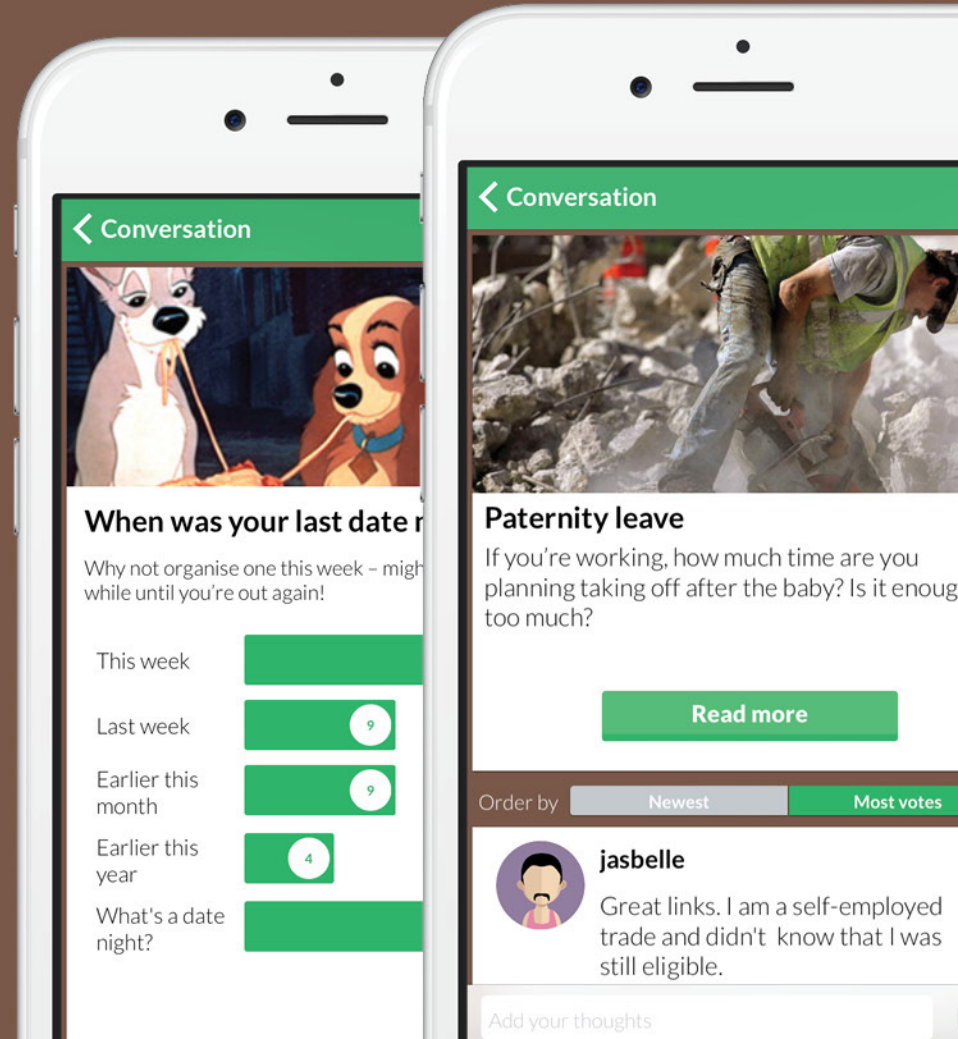


The information in the library was useful as a starting point and easy to access and also in an accessible format



Conversation forum

- Antenatal to 26 wks postpartum
- Qualitative thematic analysis
- 1497 comments
- 208 contributors



User perspectives

Conversation and notifications

Different topics that fathers may not have thought to discuss



Hearing from other dads, the community feel



I liked the different topic reminders



Generating discussion for something not normally considered



Enjoyed giving my opinion on topics



Reading other dads comments



Themes

Seek and offer
support



Social connection



Informational
support



Sharing
experiences





Seek and offer support

- Support seeking
- Support giving
- Supporting mums

Support offering



[I am] Lucky with FIFO I will get 5 outa 6 weeks off so hopefully that works well before going back to the normal roster thinking the even time roster should work pretty well but you never know. Feel sorry for the boys who work the longer rosters away or fellas that can't have too much time off. Planning the flight home is the biggest gamble!!



Social connection

- Joining in
- Conversational
- Using humour

Social connection - using humour



Learn how to make her Vegemite on toast just right. It sounds like an easy job but f**k me I never knew you could get it wrong! Tip for rookies ensure the butter is melted in before the vegemite is applied near death experience that one.



Informational support



I read an article on this app where the dad was the first skin to skin contact his baby received. Something to do with a complicated birth and having a caesarean. He went in prepared with a top he could un-button easily in fact. In the event of a tricky birth and if my Mrs wasn't in a position to make that first contact for sure I'd love to be the first person my son meets!!!



Definitely keen to do skin to skin—or rather skin to chest rug—being more appropriate in my case.



I did skin to skin it was cool and helped relieve some stress of the birth when mum was taken to theatre.



Hadn't thought about dad/baby skin to skin. It makes sense that it could benefit the bonding experience.



Wow what a great read! Something for fathers right from baby's first hours alive.



Sharing experiences

- Breastfeeding
- Fatherhood
- Sharing intimate information
- Bonding

Sharing intimate information



We lost [our first] one. The emotional struggles after that meant telling people the second time wasn't the same. All good now though. 34 weeks and the little one is fit as a malee bull!

Findings



Acceptable approach, fathers prepared to seek support online



Off topic important



Higher number actively engaged - still many not



Clear directions for future research



Next steps

Regional Western Australia



Access to services



Access to antenatal classes



Seasonal work



COVID-19

Milk Man in regional WA

- ✓ Partnership with WACHS
- ✓ App publicly released
- ✓ Support with promotion to country dads
- ✓ Promotional materials available



Government of **Western Australia**
WA Country Health Service



- Made changes to the app, added regional content and links
- 723 app downloads
- Most read articles are in the antenatal period
- Highest use week - week of baby birth



Thank you



becky@rhpi.com.au

Jane.scott@curtin.edu.au