

Welcome to the April 2012 edition of the Access Australia eNews.

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... also upcoming events and recent news articles of interest to those who have difficulties conceiving.



1. Politics and IVF

AccessAustralia works to ensure that we can have equity of access to affordable medical treatment to have a family. We do this via written submissions, appearing at state and federal government enquiries and meeting with relevant Ministers.

As the Federal Budget approaches, we wait to see if the government will reduce the reimbursement of IVF in Medicare. Many of you have been involved in past campaigns sending emails to federal MPs and contacting your local Member, protesting changes that have threatened the affordability of IVF treatment for many people. We remain vigilant and will let you know if there is anything to report this year.

We are also continuing to work to have the requirements in Victorian legislation removed, which force people to have police and child protection order checks before commencing IVF treatment.

We have accused the government of treating infertile people differently; that if they believed that this was in the best interests of any children born that they would then subject all fertile parents to these checks before taking any child home from hospital.

Sandra Dill - Chief Executive



2. Mother's Day

Another Mother's Day is upon us.

For those members who have realised their wish for a child during the past year, the next Mother's Day will be a special day of celebration.

However, for others it could be particularly difficult to face the emotions that a day like Mother's Day can raise. It can be a painful reminder of other people's success and the losses we have faced. We hope it will be a day where you will be kind to yourself and recognise your commitment to become a parent. If you have not already done so, the ACCESS fact sheet read on coping with special days is worth a read. You can find it at: http://www.access.org.au/information/fact_sheets.

This month's eNews also provides you with some articles from around the world that will help you to understand yourself, your reactions and those people around you.

- On Helium.com there is an article entitled "Coping with Mother's Day after a miscarriage" <http://www.helium.com/items/1809523-coping-with-mothers-day-after-a-miscarriage>
- The Australian book [Swimming Upstream: the struggle to conceive](#), has an online excerpt from the chapter "Christmas and other occasions" which outlines the issues you may face on Mother's Day and offers professional advice on how to deal with it.
- Infertility and Mother's Day coping strategies can be found at: <http://www.fertilityauthority.com/articles/infertility-and-mothers-day-coping-strategies>
- A blog written about Mother's Day from an infertile woman's perspective: <http://morethancoping.wordpress.com/2011/05/04/shannon-woodward-mothers-day-from-an-infertile-womans-perspective/>
- An 'Infertile Mother's Day Poem' from Baby and Bump forum: <http://www.babyandbump.com/problems-trying-conceive/913559-infertile-mother-s-day-poem.html>



3. Egg donors remain fertile after procedure: study

Donating eggs does not appear to hurt a woman's chances of becoming pregnant in the years after the procedure, a small study from Belgium found. Few other studies have looked at the effects of egg-harvesting procedures on the future reproductive health of women who donate eggs.

Some experts question whether hormonally stimulating the ovaries – which makes them produce extra eggs – and removing those eggs from a healthy, young woman could later increase her chance of infertility, but others contend there are no serious long-term risks.

For the full story:

- From Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/12/us-egg-donors-idUSBRE83B1EM20120412>



4. Opinion: why the promise to sperm donors must be honoured

Pioneer in the treatment of infertility in Australia, Professor John McBain, recently presented this opinion piece in The Age in Melbourne about why he believes sperm donors who were promised anonymity need to have it honoured.

Read the full story at:

- <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/why-the-promise-to-sperm-donors-must-be-honoured-20120410-1wmus.html>



5. Don't forget to join us on Facebook!

Thanks to those members who've joined us on Facebook, shared their stories, asked questions and offered their comments. If you'd like to join in the conversation, we're sure there are other members who will benefit from hearing how you've addressed the issues you've faced ... along with the support of sharing your story in a safe community that understands what you're going through.

So if you haven't already connected with us, please visit us at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Access-Australia/139771856113076>. If you have already linked up, please let us know what sort of discussions or information you'd like to have on Facebook.

We realise that infertility can be a very personal time for some, while others enjoy being able to share their experience and learn from others. So what do you want to be able to do? Please let us know at info@access.org.au or simply post!



6. Share your support in social media!

While we're talking about Facebook, we've recently posted some information to help people show their support for people going through infertility.

If you'd like to spread the message among your Facebook friends, you only need to 'share' the information.

If you're someone who doesn't broadcast your experiences with IVF or conceiving and don't want to share, that's fine too. Please don't feel pressured into talking about something that you don't wish to.

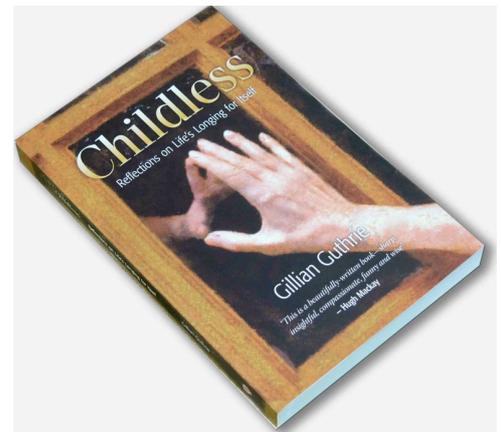
We're just looking at different ways of getting our messages out to the wider Australian community ... particularly when infertility – and the experience of those who go through it – seems to be a taboo subject.

7. Grieving for a child she never had

Author Gillian Guthrie has just launched a new book – *Childless: reflections on life's longing for itself*.

At the age of forty-five she finally knew - empathically and unequivocally - that she really did want to have children. Her belated clarity coincided with meeting her life partner whom she believed - without doubt - would make a wonderful father. But she also knew they would never have children. By then, it was too late.

From that point, the author became preoccupied by a grief that had lain dormant – deeply personal, private and troubling - which she found hard to understand or explain. How do you grieve for a child who never lived? Why should that absence cause grief as intense at times as the loss of a loved one?



Childless: Reflections on Life's Longing for Itself sets out to find answers. Her quest led her into the minds and emotions of scores of women who, for any number of reasons ranging from choice, through to circumstance, infertility and abuse, had found themselves without children. It led her also to the experts in IVF treatments, to counsellors and to participants in IVF programs, including AccessAustralia's Sandra Dill and the Fertility Society of Australia's Prof. Michael Chapman.

Because so many women find their childlessness a difficult thing to talk about the topic gets only scant public acknowledgement and even less sympathy and understanding. Gillian Guthrie's book is full of information and insights which illuminate the childless life – its sorrows and sometimes its joy.

Childless: Reflections on Life's Longing for Itself is available at bookstores and online through the website www.childlessreflections.com.



8. Women over 40 told: 'Don't take IVF success for granted'

Women in their 40s expect fertility treatment to rewind their 'biological clock', and are upset when they find out they can't have babies, a top UK fertility specialist warns.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2126057/Women-40-told-Dont-IVF-success-granted.html#ixzz1sBDAKPjm>



9. Have your say in our Forum

The AccessAustralia forum can be found at: <http://access.c-crm.org/forum/>

Some of the topics under discussion this month included:

- IVF and acupuncture
- PCOS experiences
- Private health insurance and IVF
- Changing doctors after failed IVF cycles

So have your say – or just read others' stories and comments about how they are coping with infertility – in our Forum!



News articles:

Treatment and infertility issues in the global news in the past month:

- Gel to boost male fertility, Daily Telegraph, UK
< <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9204521/Gel-to-boost-male-fertility-being-developed-by-scientists.html> >
- Fertility treatment bans in Europe raise controversy and questions, CBS News, USA
< http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504763_162-57413777-10391704/fertility-treatment-bans-in-europe-raise-controversy-questions/ >
- What tsunami took, IVF gave, Deccan Chronicle, India
< <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/cities/others/what-tsunami-took-ivf-gave-248> >
- Are IVF clinics hiding the risks of PGD from American parents? BioEdge, USA
< http://www.bioedge.org/index.php/bioethics/bioethics_article/10017 >
- Biological clock ticks despite technology, Scientific American, USA
< <http://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode.cfm?id=biological-clock-ticks-despite-tech-12-04-11> >
- Dreams do come true after 44 IVF cycles, Mail Online, UK
< <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2128124/Trudie-Thompson-finally-conceives-spending-30k-44-cycles-IVF-TWELVE-YEARS.html?ito=feeds-newsxml> >
- Women able to delay motherhood through ovary freezing, Telegraph.co.uk, UK
< <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9206190/Women-able-to-delay-motherhood-through-ovary-freezing.html> >
- Human Egg Cells Can Be Grown in Lab From Stem Cells – Study, International Business Times, UK
< <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/articles/325164/20120407/stem-cells-ivf-infertility-reproduction-babies-women.htm#ixzz1sCpEKsDS> >
- IVF embryo bank may get cramped, NT News, Australia
< http://www.ntnews.com.au/article/2012/04/06/297721_ntnews.html >

- Riding the IVF rollercoaster, The Herald, Ireland
< <http://www.herald.ie/lifestyle/health-beauty/riding-the-iv-f-rollercoaster-3081774.html> >
- Infertility in men: are his swimmers stuck? Msnbc.com, USA
< http://www.ntnews.com.au/article/2012/04/06/297721_ntnews.html >
- Infertility without a cause, The Standard, Kenya
< <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/sports/InsidePage.php?id=2000056191&cid=300> >



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