

Your Fertility - evaluation of a health promotion program to improve awareness of factors that affect fertility

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Background

The most important factors affecting fertility are parental age, smoking, obesity, and mis-timing of intercourse. It is estimated that 50% of sub-fertility could be avoided if these risk factors were eliminated. Knowledge among people of reproductive age about the factors that influence fertility and reproductive outcomes, including ART outcomes, is generally low. An environmental scan in 2010 revealed no existing comprehensive fertility-related health promotion program. 'Your Fertility' was established in 2011 to improve awareness among the general population as well as education and health professionals about the potentially modifiable factors that affect fertility and reproductive outcomes.

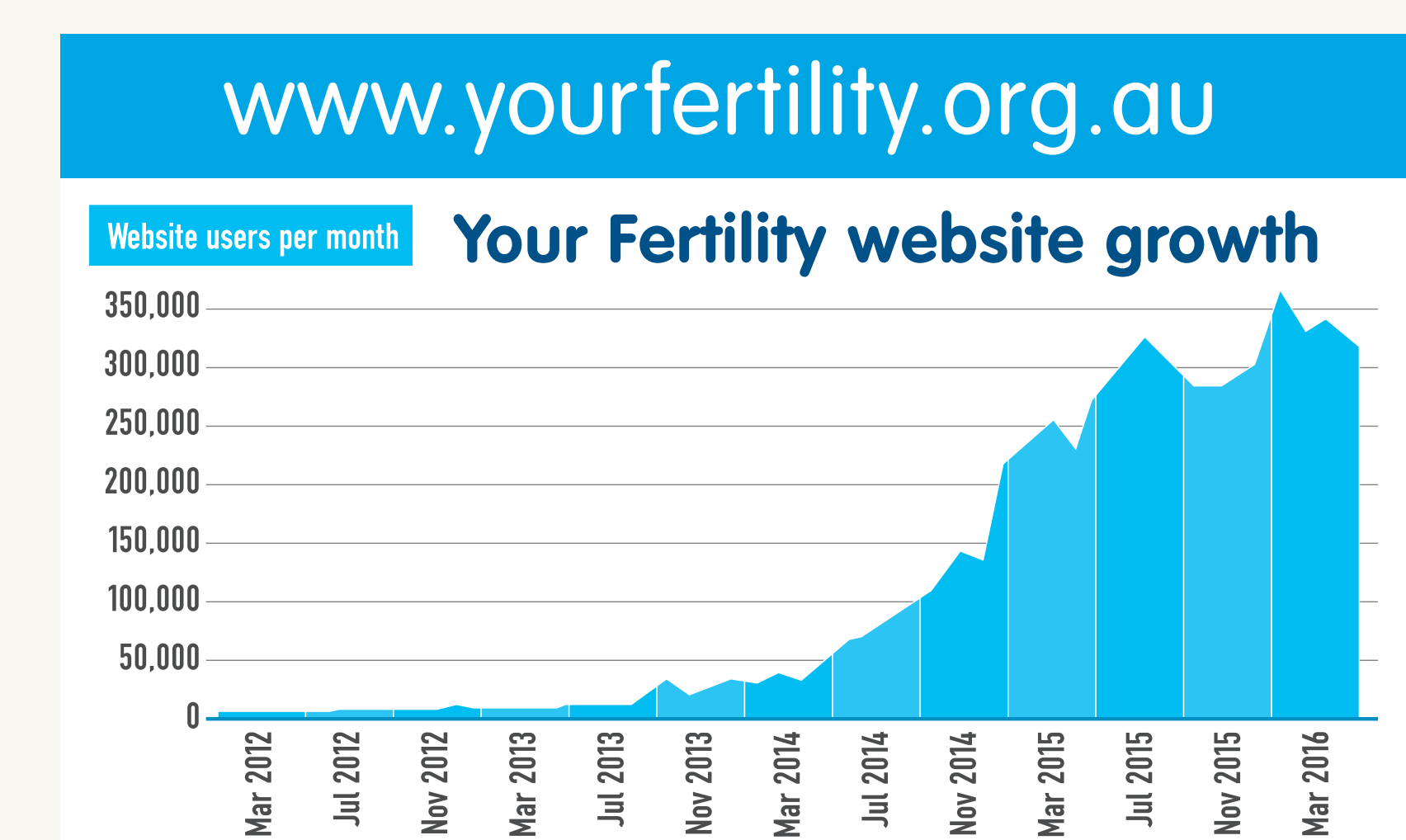
Aim

To evaluate the reach of the 'Your Fertility' program from its inception in 2011 to June 2016.

Method

The 'Fertility Coalition' was established to deliver the program. It consists of the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority, the Robinson Research Institute, Andrology Australia, and Jean Hailes for Women's Health. The goal was to reach people of reproductive age together with education and health professionals with evidence-based information and to form partnerships with other organisations to optimise the reach of program messages. Evidence to inform the program's activities and dissemination strategy was drawn from the published literature and quantitative and qualitative formative community research conducted in 2011 and 2013. The main platform for engagement with the target audiences is the program's website which features:

- accessible evidence-based information
- dedicated sections for women and men
- section for education and health professionals
- downloadable resources (47)
- videos and animations
- interactive elements including a fertility quiz
- ovulation calendar
- preconception health checklist
- blog with updates on new research
- Facebook and Twitter.



Activities

Community Members

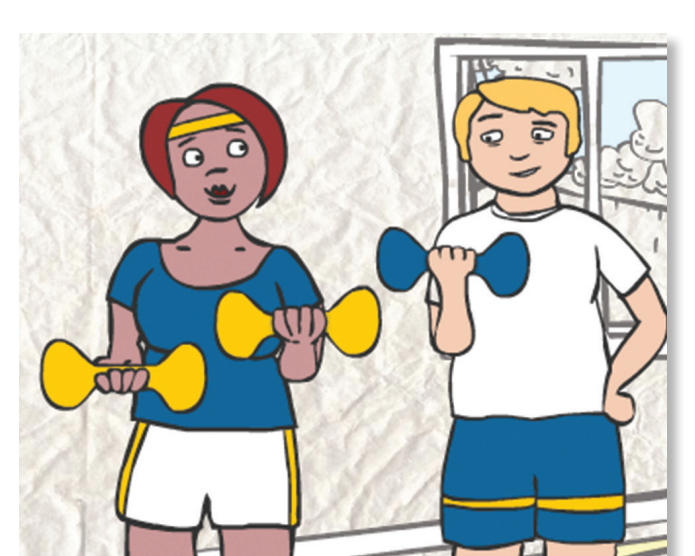
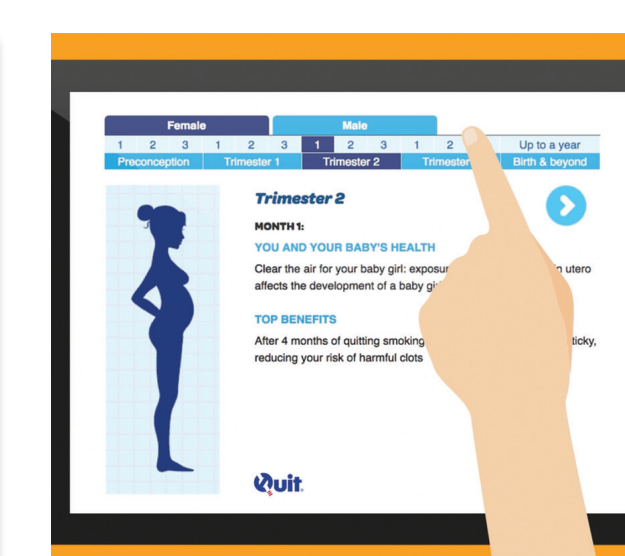
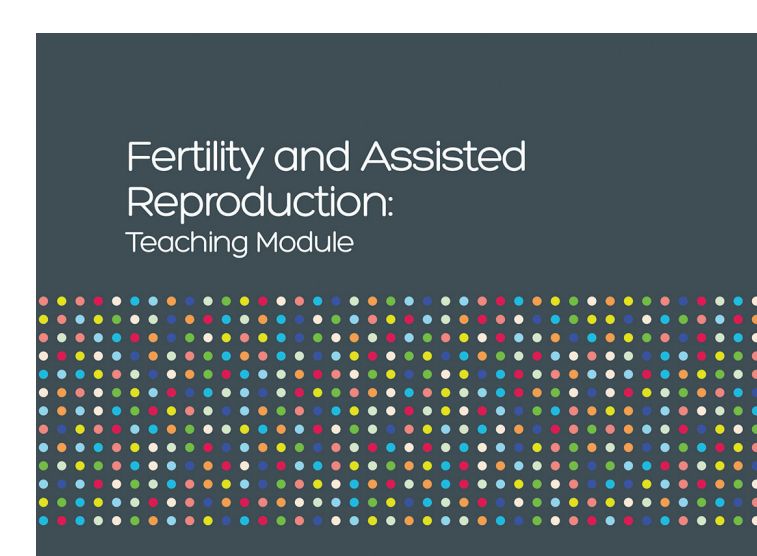
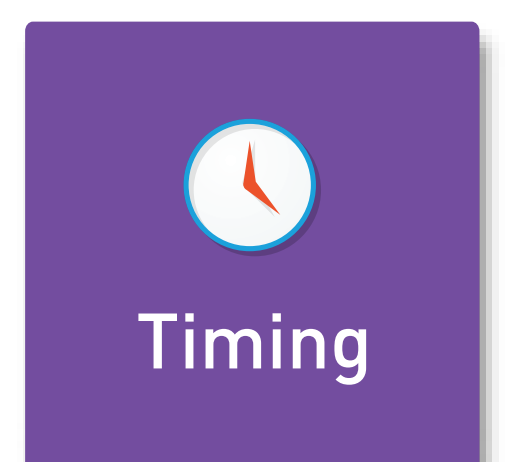
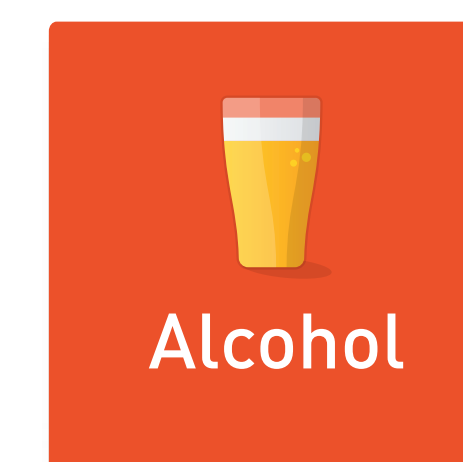
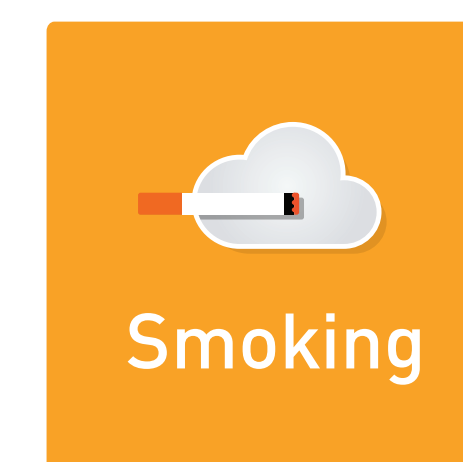
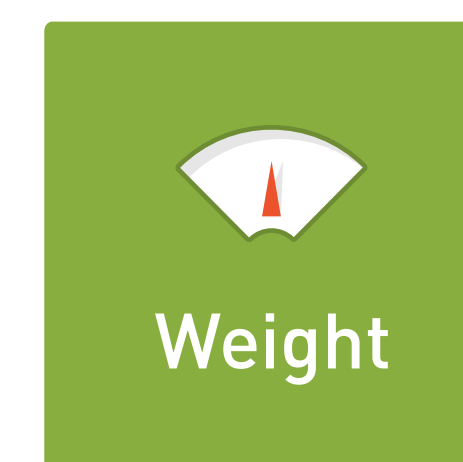
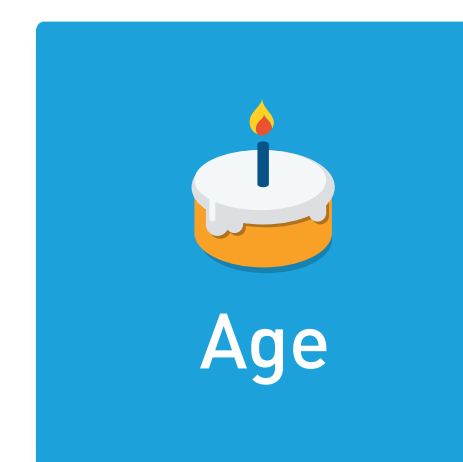
- Launch of website and formative research findings (2012)
- Fertility Week focusing on: key modifiable factors affecting fertility (2012); men and fertility (2013); timing of intercourse (2014); obesity (2015)
- 'Fertility is Ageist' campaign using: social and traditional media; sponsored articles and advertisements on high volume websites; and posters in fitness centres (2014)
- 'Quit for Fertility' campaign (2016)
- Fact sheets for downloading
- Social marketing campaigns using mixed media and organisational newsletters
- Seminars with web-based film clips to expand reach.

Partnerships

- Fertility Society of Australia
- Family Planning Victoria and New South Wales
- University of Melbourne
- Monash University
- Quit Victoria and Australian networks
- The Obesity Coalition
- Live Lighter (obesity campaign)
- Diabetes Victoria
- Health websites: Health Direct and Better Health.

Education and Health Professionals

- Online learning modules / webinars for professional development credit
- Fact sheets to download
- Articles in professional magazines
- Teaching aid for primary / secondary school teachers
- Web-based film clips
- Seminars and presentations for health and educational professionals.



Evaluation 2011 – June 2016

Partnerships

- 16 collaborative partnerships established
- Partnerships have broadened the reach of the program messages
- Ongoing reciprocal partnership activities including smoking cessation, healthy weight, and fertility protection campaigns.

Media

Traditional

- 150 million reached (based on newspaper circulation and radio audiences)

Social

- 4.1 million reached
- 96,000 engaged
- 4,359 following.

Education and health professional engagement

- 4,200 professionals undertook learning modules
- 14,685 visits to professional section of website
- 23,320 fact sheets downloaded
- 288 teaching aids downloaded 2015-16
- 15 lectures to professional and student groups
- 8 articles in professional magazines
- 14 conference presentations
- 3 peer reviewed publications.

Website use

- 5 million unique website users
- Growth to 2.6 unique million website users in 2015
- 8.5 million views of the 'Timing and fertility' page
- Fertility quiz accessed 397,059 times
- 63,600 resources downloaded
- 189,000 film / animation plays.

Conclusion: the knowledge gaps identified in formative community research and the extensive reach and use of the resources offered by the 'Your Fertility' program confirm that it meets a need for public and professional education about the impact of age and health behaviours on fertility and reproductive outcomes.