

Copy of letter sent to websites accompanying the draft *Dads and Post Natal Depression: How do websites score?* report

Editor/Manager/Content manager/CEO

Dear [name]

Please find attached a draft report titled *Dads and Post Natal Depression: How do websites score? Guidelines for assessing the father-inclusive level of web-based information and support for fathers in families with Postnatal Depression (PND)* which includes an assessment of your website.

The report has been prepared as part of the work of two organizations: the *Fathers and Families Research Program* of the Family Action Centre at the University of Newcastle and the *Australian Fatherhood Research Network (AFRN)*. The Steering Group for the AFRN is Professor Trevor Cairney, University of New South Wales, Dr Richard Fletcher, University of Newcastle, Professor Ilan Katz, University of New South Wales, Professor Bruce Maycock, Curtin University of Technology, Ms Sam Page, Family Relationship Services Australia and A/Professor Campbell Paul, Royal Children's Hospital, Victoria. Dr Richard Fletcher is responsible for the content of the report.

The report has been prepared to assist professionals and researchers to judge the extent to which a website contains content specifically relevant to fathers when referring fathers or other family members for support or when seeking further information themselves. We expect that the final report will be placed on the University of Newcastle website at the end of February and then made available to other organizations wishing to reproduce the document or link to the URL.

You will note that the [name of website] website scores [website score] out of a possible 18. As the report makes clear the assessment is not intended as a criticism of the general website or its designers. The scoring system for the websites is restricted to the provision of information and support to fathers in families with PND. We are also aware that several websites are planning to upgrade their content in ways which will supply more father-inclusive content. For these reasons we wished to alert your organization to the progress of the work and to provide for an opportunity for feedback on the report. We would be pleased to support any planned upgrades of content or capacity on the website.

Feedback may take the form of a response to the report or an indication of plans to offer father-specific material or simply to comment on the issue of fathers and families with PND.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'AA' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Dr. Richard Fletcher
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19 February 2010

Dr Richard Fletcher
Fathers and Families Research Program
Convenor Australian Fatherhood Research Network Senior Lecturer
Family Action Centre Faculty of Health
The University of Newcastle
NEWCASTLE NSW 2308


Dear Dr Fletcher

Thank you for your draft report titled '**Dads and Post Natal Depression: How do websites score? Guidelines for assessing the father - inclusive level of web-based information and support for fathers in families with Postnatal Depression**'.

As the national depression initiative, we are pleased to have been included in this report as we appreciate the opportunity to receive feedback on the postnatal section of our website and how it addresses criteria relevant to fathers nominated by the work of the *Fathers and Families Research Program of the Family Action Centre at the University of Newcastle and the Australian Fatherhood Research Network (AFRN)*.

Your feedback is timely as we are currently scoping the range of information materials and website content for not only mothers, but also fathers/partners and health professionals under the national perinatal depression initiative. Our internal review also identified a number of the issues outlined in your report, and in response, we are undertaking significant work. In the area of fathers specifically this includes:

- Conducting qualitative research with partners of women with postnatal depression to examine the impact and needs of these men when living with and supporting their partners with perinatal depression (carer perspective).
- Undertaking qualitative research with men who themselves may have experienced depression or anxiety prior to or following the birth of their baby (consumer perspective).

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Beyond Blue Limited

beyondblue: opening our eyes to depression and anxiety across Australia

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, AC – Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia – Patron

- Conducting quantitative research with men to assess their current literacy surrounding perinatal depression and anxiety so that this can inform targeted campaign messages and provide baseline data to review progress over time.
- Specific resources are currently being developed for men/fathers; this includes guides for monitoring their mental health, partners' mental health and infant interactions. You may also note that our existing resources do contain information for dads/partners particularly Our 'Emotional Health during Pregnancy and Early Parenthood' booklets for parents of single and multiple birth children.
- Developing a pathways to care map to assist fathers to identify local treatments for their partners to direct fathers to where they themselves may access support; and
- Through our blueVoices network we have actively commenced recruiting fathers to join blueVoices to ensure fathers' perspectives are well represented in the work of *beyondblue*. In this capacity the men will be invited to sit on committees, speak to the media, and at public forums/presentations.

We note in your letter the feedback that *beyondblue* does not provide interactive online forums or chat rooms. We have decided not to provide interactive online forums or chat rooms due to issues surrounding duty of care and our inability to provide 24 hour seven day a week monitoring and support to the forum.

Thank you for your offer to support the upgrade of the website and we look forward to your feedback as we progress on the revision of the website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leonie Young". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized flourish at the end of the word "Young".

Leonie Young
CEO

beyondblue: the national depression initiative

Black Dog Institute website

Response sent as email 3/03/2010 5:35 pm

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your follow up email. I would like to respond briefly to your request.

The Black Dog Institute has a range of resources on depression, PND and bipolar disorder. Our consumer- focussed factsheets are available here <http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/factsheets/index.cfm>. These resources include several on PND for sufferers, as well as one on advice for friends and families of people with mood disorders.

The Institute also has a range of Professional Education programs for health professionals including GPs, psychologists, nurses and allied health, school counsellors and others. Our programs account for both consumer and carer perspectives, in addition to strictly clinical content on diagnosis and patient management. Indeed, we are currently developing a peri- natal depression program for general practitioners, and are including both consumers and carers in the development of related materials and resources.

In sum, the Black Dog Institute thoroughly takes account of consumer and carer perspectives, both in the provision of direct information, and through our education of clinicians.

I wish your organisation well in pursuit of enhancing availability of such resources.

Regards,

Larissa Briedis
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PANDA Website

Response sent as email 4/03/2010 4:56 pm

Richard

I am sorry this is late and brief.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your research regarding the father inclusivity of a range of websites.

PANDA has been providing support, information and referral helpline services to women and their families living with perinatal depression and anxiety for close to 30 years. This has and continues to include the many men who provide support to their partners living with perinatal depression and anxiety as well as men who themselves experience depression and anxiety at the time of childbirth.

PANDA's website is an important part of its delivery of support and resources with ever increasing traffic. In particular the fact sheets and content about living with perinatal depression and anxiety draw on the experiences of the many men and women who have contributed to PANDA's growth over the years. In particular PANDA has a range of unique fact sheets specifically targeting fathers as carers as well as highlighting their own needs for support.

The Guidelines for father-inclusive information and support provide useful information for the strengthening of PANDA's website content as well as fact sheets. Resources for web and fact sheet development are always hard to come by for small NGOs but we are excited to be able to soon launch our new website which will provide structural improvements to the site, greater scope for development and inhouse management. It is an opportunity to further review the content for fathers and draw on the Guidelines.

Thank you for the information that will support our ongoing resource development to ensure greater avenues for support for fathers.

Belinda Horton

Chief Executive Officer

Belinda Horton

Chief Executive Officer

PANDA

Post & Antenatal Depression Association

810 Nicholson St North Fitzroy VIC 3068

Support: 1300 726 306

Admin: 9481 3377

Fax: 9482 6210

Mob: 0417 532 521

www.panda.org.au

PANDA has an online donation link with [ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) - please make a donation to support PANDA's helpline for women and their families with postnatal depression. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Your support is greatly appreciated.

http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giving/appeal_details.form?appealId=1113

2 March 2010

Dr Richard Fletcher
Father and Families Research Program
Convenor Australian Fatherhood Research Network Senior Lecturer
Family Action Centre
Faculty of Health
The University of Newcastle
Newcastle 2308

Dear Richard

Re: Father inclusiveness on the Raising Children Network Website

Thank you for providing us with a draft copy of your report, *Dads and Postnatal Depression: How do websites score? Guidelines for assessing the father – inclusive level of web-based information and support for father in families with Postnatal Depression.*

Funded by the Australian Government, the Raising Children website (www.raisingchildren.net.au) is a national parenting information website, addressing the universal information needs of mothers, fathers and other carers of children aged 0-8. This award winning website was designed to provide all parents and professionals with research-based, reliable information to support them in their role of raising children.

Since your audit, we have published a piece on fathers and postnatal depression written by PANDA which will hopefully expand the audience for this useful material. Over the next few months, we will also publish the following pieces:

- Becoming a dad: a big adjustment
- Father-child bonding: getting to know your baby
- Fathers: the importance of being involved
- Breastfeeding: how dads can help
- After separation: how dads can stay involved
- Depression in fathers

We will also continue our best endeavours to ensure all content is inclusive and speaks directly to fathers as well as mothers.

Thank you for your feedback on the father-inclusiveness of our website content which focuses on Fathers and Postnatal Depression. Your analysis was very useful and will help to inform the development of our content in the future.

Yours sincerely



Warren Cann

Executive Director

Parenting Research Centre

The Better Health Channel website

Response sent as email 3/03/2010 6:11 pm

The fact sheet on which this assessment is based is one of over 1700 fact sheets on the Better Health Channel. Our fact sheets cover a wide range of health and medical topics. We welcome new research to guide and shape the information we provide to consumers. Feedback we receive is considered as part of the cyclical review that drives content development and improvements to our site. We see this as a critical part of the continuing expert and community dialogue that is central to the Better Health Channel quality assurance process.

The Better Health Channel team

Meredith Butler

BHC Content Manager

Meredith Butler | Content Management Team Leader | Better Health Channel

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I work Monday to Thursday

Better Health Channel - Australia's number 1 health and medical information website

WA Health Department website

Reponse sent as email 22/01/2010 11:41 am

Hi Richard

Many thanks for passing on the draft report. We were happy to see that our website did comparatively well, but also recognise that we still have a lot more to do in being father inclusive.

Your assessment of father-inclusive website information seems very thorough and a helpful (and much needed) guide for those wanting to improve information provision for fathers in PND-affect families. I'm certain it will assist us in making improvements.

We look forward to seeing the final report on this and any other projects regarding fathers and perinatal mental health.

Thank you once again.

WA Perinatal Mental Health Unit

Women and Newborn Health Service

15 Loretto Street

Subiaco WA 6008

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Fax: (08) 9340 1782

Generic email: wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au

Consumer website: www.wnhs.health.wa.gov.au/emotionalhealth.php

Health professional website: www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/wapmhu.php

Ngala Response: Dad's and Post Natal Depression . How Do Websites Score

Ngala welcomes external assessment of our website in regard to the specific measures utilised. It both brings to our attention areas where we do not score at all and helps to set a guide for our improvement in other areas.

Currently our HeyDadWA team are working on improving the father specific content and making our website father friendly. This focus has arisen as result of recent upgrading of our website with a new look, structure and more information content.

Information on perinatal mental health is currently the focus of updating Ngala's "Hey Dad Fatherhood in the first 12 months" booklet in partnership with beyondblue and we hope that this will flow on to our website. The area of perinatal mental health is a key subject area in discussions during our work with fathers in antenatal classes as well as those families who access Ngala early parenting services following the birth.

The team have also recently completed an audit of the visual images on the website aimed at improving the appeal to fathers. Making the information for fathers more directly accessible on the website has been flagged as a concern. Further utilisation of content from Ngala's work around making early brain development messages more accessible is also planned.

Pointing fathers to further information and sharing the experiences of fathers are ones that we will consider as we work on father specific content . We have much rich information on the experience of fathers with babies and young children from our work with fathers at Ngala and in the community that could be used to engage visitors to the website.

One of the next stages in our website development will include the development of forums. In the planning we will consider the inclusion of a fathers forum area.

Contact : heydadwa@ngala.com.au

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