

# **MAKING MILK MAN: THE THEORY-BASED DEVELOPMENT OF A BREASTFEEDING MOBILE APPLICATION FOR MEN.**

Becky WHITE<sup>1</sup>, Sharyn BURNS<sup>1</sup>, Roslyn GIGLIA<sup>2</sup> and Jane SCOTT<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Curtin University, WA, Australia, <sup>2</sup> Telethon Kids Institute, WA, Australia

## **Abstract Framework: Traditional**

**Title:** Making Milk Man: The theory-based development of a breastfeeding mobile application for men.

### **Theme**

This research employs traditional health promotion methods in the design of an innovative mHealth intervention. The Milk Man mobile application is designed to develop personal skills by increasing self-efficacy and promoting positive attitudes about the paternal role in breastfeeding and to help strengthen community action by providing an online forum for men to support and learn from each other.

This study 'makes it matter' by following a best practice approach to the development of a gamified, socially connected mobile application, the evaluation of which will provide guidance for broader health promotion interventions seeking to utilise mHealth.

### **Aim**

This project aims to develop an engaging theory-based breastfeeding mobile application targeted at fathers of infants.

### **Challenges of issue**

Less than 15% of Australian babies are exclusively breastfed to 6 months. Partner support is integral to a woman's decision to initiate and continue breastfeeding, yet many men can feel unprepared for their paternal role in breastfeeding.

### **What did you do?**

Social Cognitive Theory was used to inform Milk Man's development. The mobile application was developed by a multidisciplinary team. Focus groups were held with new and expectant fathers, and health professionals. A prototype was tested with fathers via a think-aloud study, and the completion of the Mobile Application Rating Scale (MARS).

### **Outcomes**

Qualitative findings from the focus groups guided development. The think-aloud walkthroughs identified 6 areas to be addressed. The average MARS Score was 4.3 out of 5. Milk Man was designed to provide fathers with social support and information aiming to increase the support they can offer their breastfeeding partners. It utilises engagement strategies such as gamification and social connectivity.

### **Why does it matter?**

Research shows if fathers are more supportive of breastfeeding, their partners are likely to breastfeed for longer. An increase in breastfeeding duration and/or exclusively will result in greater health benefits for the child and mother.

The development of Milk Man followed a best practice approach including the use of theory, involving users and working with a multidisciplinary team. The application is currently being trialled and evaluated in the Parent Infant Feeding Initiative RCT.