



# NATIONAL **FERTILITY** CONFERENCE

27-28 OCTOBER 2017

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY  
MELBOURNE

**FINAL PROGRAM**

[www.nationalfertilityconference.com](http://www.nationalfertilityconference.com)

## **Restoring Fertility Holistically**

Organised by the *Australasian Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine (AIRRM)*,  
In collaboration with the National Fertility Awareness Agencies:

*Australian Council of Natural Family Planning Inc.*

*FertilityCare Centres of Australasia Inc.*

*Ovulation Method Research and Reference Centre of Australia Ltd.*



AUSTRALASIAN  
INSTITUTE FOR  
**RESTORATIVE  
REPRODUCTIVE  
MEDICINE**



FERTILITY CARE



Billings LIFE™  
Leaders In Fertility Education

## FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER 2017

### Free Public Forum and Opening of Conference:

#### Modern Fertility Treatments – Controversies and Future Directions

This forum opens the conference and explores global trends in infertility management and impacts on women's health and wellbeing. A panel including fertility awareness-based educators and a consumer couple will consider questions from the audience.

Address: **Mercy Lecture Theatre**  
Australian Catholic University  
17 Young St (off Victoria Pde), Fitzroy

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6:30pm **Light Refreshments**

7:00pm **Welcome and Opening of Conference**  
Prof. Michelle Campbell DN RN FAAN  
Executive Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences,  
Australian Catholic University (ACU)

7:10pm **IVF Reconsidered – Impact of  
Age, Affluence and Avarice**  
Prof. R. John Aitken  
ScD FSRB FRSN FAHMS FRSE FAA  
Pro Vice-Chancellor,  
Faculty of Health and Medicine,  
Laureate Professor of Biological Sciences,  
The University of Newcastle, NSW

7:40pm **Reclaiming Women's Health –  
a Global Restorative Approach**  
Prof. Dr. Pilar Vigil MD PhD FACOG  
Pontifical Catholic University of Chile,  
Medical Director Reproductive Health  
Research Institute (RHRI), Chile

8:10pm **Panel Discussion**  
Prof. John Aitken, Prof. Pilar Vigil,  
Dr Lek-Lim Chan (Billings Ovulation Method  
Malaysia), Noelle Melrose  
(Symptothermal Method Australia),  
Edwina Gotz (FertilityCare Australasia),  
Rachel & Bonny Nardella, Consumer Couple.

*Moderators* Dr Luke McLindon MBBS FRACGP FRANZCOG  
Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, Mater Hospital,  
Brisbane  
Dr Cathy Peterson MBBS BSc(Med) CSCT  
FRACGP CFCMC Fertility Fundamentals,  
Adelaide

9:15pm **Close of Forum**

## SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER 2017

### Restoring Fertility A Masterclass with Prof. Pilar Vigil

The masterclass presents an exciting opportunity to learn from Professor Vigil – internationally acclaimed researcher, author, lecturer and clinician in the field of women's reproductive health.

The program consists of three lectures by Professor Vigil presenting current research updates contributing to new developments in fertility health, and infertility knowledge; Each lecture is followed by analysis of cases presented by fertility awareness-based educators. The final session is an interactive learning experience with case studies on male and female infertility, presented by both Professors Vigil and Aitken.

**Mercy Lecture Theatre**  
Australian Catholic University  
17 Young St (off Victoria Pde), Fitzroy

8:15am **Registration**

8:50am **Welcome**

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### SESSION 1

**Co-chairs: Dr Mary Walsh, Dr Brendan Miller**

9:00am **Investigating the Infertile Couple –  
Current Developments**

9:45am **Charts and Case Presentations from each  
Fertility Awareness-Based Method (FABM)**  
Amanda Bowen, Billings Ovulation Method  
(BOM), Monica Vane, Symptothermal Method  
(STM), Edwina Gotz, Creighton Model  
FertilityCare System (CrMS)

10:00am **Questions and Discussion**

10:40am **Morning Tea**

### SESSION 2

**Co-chairs: Dr Alison Bignell, Dr Terrence Kent**

11:00am **Understanding Puberty –  
Adolescent Health Re-visited**

11:45am **Charts and Case Presentations  
from each FABM**  
Terri Vyner (CrMS), Gillian Barker (BOM),  
Bee Teh (STM)

12:00pm **Questions and Discussion**

12:40pm **Lunch**



See conference website  
[www.nationalfertilityconference.com](http://www.nationalfertilityconference.com)  
for details on CPD points, pre-reading,  
and conference papers.

### SESSION 3

Co-chairs: **Dr Lucia Murnane, Dr Joseph Turner**

- 1:30pm **Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome – a Research Update**
- 2:10pm **Charts and Case Presentations from each FABM**  
Carla Chigwidden (BOM), Teresa Baker (STM), Cathryn Marshall (CrMS)
- 2:30pm **Questions and Discussion**
- 3:10pm **Afternoon Tea**

### SESSION 4

Co-chairs: **Dr Amanda Lamont, Dr Elvis Šeman**

- 3:30pm **Infertility – Case Studies**  
Professor Pilar Vigil
- 4:10pm **Male Factor Infertility – Case Studies**  
Professor John Aitken
- 4:30pm **Questions and Discussion**  
Professors Vigil and Aitken
- 5:00pm **Close of Conference**

## SATURDAY EVENING

28 OCTOBER 2017

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### Conference Mass

- 6:00pm **Vigil Mass**  
St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral  
1 Cathedral Place, East Melbourne  
  
Principal Celebrant & Homilist:  
The Most Rev. Mark Edwards,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne

### Conference Dinner

- 7:30pm **North Café**  
Mary Glowrey Building,  
Australian Catholic University,  
115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, Melbourne

## SUNDAY

29 OCTOBER 2017

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### Australian Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine (AIRRM) General Meeting

- 9am–12pm **Christ Lecture Theatre**  
Australian Catholic University  
17 Young St (off Victoria Pde), Fitzroy



# CONFERENCE SPEAKERS, PANELISTS AND MODERATORS

## Friday 27 October 2017 – Public Forum

**Professor Michelle Campbell**  
DN RN FAAN Executive Dean,  
Faculty of Health Sciences,  
Australian Catholic University (ACU)



From 2011, Michelle has been the Executive Dean and Professor of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Australian Catholic University, where she is responsible for over 16,000 students in 4 States in Australia. Prior to that she was the Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery in Victoria and NSW.

Michelle undertook her nursing training at St Vincent's Hospital and holds a Bachelor degree, Master's degree and Doctorate from LaTrobe University. Michelle is also an Adjunct Professor with University of Miami, Catholic University of America, and University of North Carolina.

Michelle has led significant growth and diversification of the Faculty of Health Sciences over the past 7 years including research joint appointments, establishment of clinical schools, international partnerships with prestigious universities, and the faculty's growth into one offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses in 16 health disciplines.

**Professor R. John Aitken**  
ScD FSRB FRSN FAHMS FRSE FAA  
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of  
Health and Medicine, Laureate  
Professor of Biological Sciences,  
The University of Newcastle, NSW



Laureate Professor John Aitken is a global leader in reproductive biology and was awarded the 2012 NSW Scientist of the Year. Based at the University of Newcastle, he is President, International Society of Andrology, Director of the Priority Research Centre in Reproductive Science and Professor of Biological Sciences.

Professor Aitken heads up a research team that is making significant inroads into human reproductive issues. His research achievements include identifying a major cause of male infertility that has resulted in new methods of therapeutic intervention.

Professor Aitken and his team have also been responsible for identifying a range of environmental and other factors, including potential toxins in cigarette smoke and pesticides that could not only impact on fertility but also create multi-generational DNA damage, resulting in a significant increase in the chances of a man's children developing cancer. The work of Professor Aitken not only addresses human reproduction but also animal reproduction where his research is a crucial aspect of improving the efficiency of Australia's world-leading horse breeding industry.

Professor Aitken joined the University of Newcastle in 1999 after forging an impressive international career, which included heading up two Geneva-based independent World Health Organisation task forces dealing with fertility regulation. John has published over 480 research articles, given more than 350 invited lectures and filed 12 patents. His work has been cited >16,000 times and since arriving in Newcastle he has generated >\$37 million in research income. He is on the Editorial Boards of eight journals and is Chairman of two pharmaceutical boards.

**Professor Pilar Vigil**  
BMed MD PhD FACOG  
Pontifical Catholic University  
of Chile, Medical Director  
Reproductive Health Research  
Institute (RHRI), Chile



Professor Pilar Vigil studied medicine at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile from 1975 to 1982. She specialised in obstetrics and gynaecology and went on to complete a PhD in Biological Sciences (Physiology) in 1987. She undertook postgraduate training at Texas Institute for Reproductive Medicine, Houston, Texas, USA; and Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia.

Professor Vigil has seen her work published in more than 100 international scientific publications (articles, books and book chapters), alongside numerous publications and interviews in journals dedicated to areas of general interest and education. She has written three books on fertility and has organized and/or participated in more than 200 congresses or seminars. She has been invited to give lectures in over 30 countries worldwide, and received many awards for women's leadership in Chile. Her current professional appointments include Associate Professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.

She has worked since 1978 in reproductive medicine including fertility, infertility and natural family planning. Together with Professor J. B. Brown she has developed the concept of the *Ovarian Continuum*.

Professor Vigil has received numerous awards for her work in medicine and is a Member of the Chilean Fertility Society, the Chilean Reproduction Society and the Latin-American Society for Research on Human Reproduction. Dr. Vigil is also president of the San Lucas Academy (Chilean Catholic Medical Doctors) and currently is President of Teen STAR international. She is also a member of the Chilean Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' Society and a member of the Chilean Natural Family Planning Society.

Pilar is married to Miguel and they have 4 children.

**Dr Lek-Lim Chan**  
BForSc MForSc MD(AM) PhD



Lek-Lim Chan was born in Kuching, Malaysia and is a doctor of complementary/natural medicine with a special interest in Natural Fertility Awareness, particularly the Billings Ovulation Method® (BOM) and in using the woman's chart as a diagnostic tool.

He has given presentations on the BOM in many parts of Malaysia as well as overseas, including Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, Australia, USA, Argentina, Brazil and United Kingdom.

Lek-Lim is currently President of the Natural Fertility Awareness Service of Malaysia (NFASM) or WOOMB Malaysia, (formerly known as 'Natural Family Planning Service of Malaysia'). He is also the Education and Scientific Coordinator for BOM in Malaysia and in 2013 he was appointed an Associate Director of the Board of Directors of WOOMB International, Melbourne.

## Noelle Melrose RN

Noelle is wife to Noel and is gifted with 3 precious children and 10 precious grandchildren. After 2 years studying commerce at university, she found a new niche and completed nursing at Holy Spirit Hospital Brisbane in 1978. For 39 years she has enjoyed a variety of nursing roles in hospitals, schools, community organisations and aged care.



For 25 years Noelle embraced the role of Coordinator of Natural Fertility Services at Centacare Rockhampton. She served on the Australian Council of Natural Family Planning (ACNFP) Teacher Training Committee for 16 years as Queensland State Trainer and the Executive for eight years, including two as President. She represented ACNFP on the National Board of Natural Family Planning (NFP) and continues as a consultant for ACNFP.

Noelle is honoured to educate couples in NFP and has presented values-based sexual and reproductive health programs to upper primary and secondary students in Central Queensland for 25 years.

Noelle is passionate about the value and dignity of each human being, exemplified by her involvement with Cherish Life Queensland since the 1990s, for which she served as Rockhampton's Branch President for more than 20 years and a member of the State Committee for 6 years.

In addition to her life's work as a nurse and pro-life advocate, Noelle is passionate about enjoying good red wine and living life to the full.

## Edwina Gotz FCP BSc BAppSc(Clin Sc) BOsteoSc GradDip(Ex Rehab) GradDip(Tert Ed) FertilityCare Practitioner, Melbourne

Edwina Gotz is a FertilityCare Practitioner who teaches the Creighton Model FertilityCare System in Melbourne. She is also employed by Victoria University where she teaches anatomy.



## Rachel and Bonny Nardella, Consumer Couple

Rachel, a paediatric nurse and Bonny married in 2012 and decided to start a family a year later. After trying to conceive for 6 months with no success, Rachel was diagnosed with an underactive thyroid and PCOS and referred to a Reproductive Endocrinologist. The next 12 months involved fertility treatment including medication, ovulation induction, IVF and two unsuccessful embryo transfers. These treatments were very stressful both physically and emotionally and we began to lose hope that having children would be a reality for us. A year later we chanced upon a GP who used a more natural and restorative approach to treating infertility. I commenced treatment with a supplement each cycle and 5 months later we were overjoyed to learn that I had conceived. Our son Jacob was born in September 2015. When Jacob was 10 months old, we achieved another pregnancy. Lucas, a healthy baby boy, was born in April this year. We are very lucky that a restorative approach worked for us and feel blessed that our dreams of having a family have come true.



## Dr Luke McLindon MBBS FRACGP FRANZCOG NFPMC Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Mater Hospital, Brisbane

As a rural GP Luke found couples facing the real prospect of childlessness. With very little to offer in primary care, he undertook further training in all the fertility awareness methods, ultimately leading to further specialist training as an obstetrician and gynaecologist.

He has completed an advanced laparoscopic surgical fellowship in endometriosis and fertility restoring surgery. He works in the Mater Health's Natural Fertility Service with Dr Terry Kent and Dr Alison Bignell, and is Principal Investigator for a series of randomised controlled trials looking at progesterone use in high risk pregnancies. His support team consists of his wife Madonna and family, and the midwives of the fertility clinic.



## Dr Catherine Peterson MBBS BSc(Med) CSCT FRACGP CFCMC

Catherine Peterson completed her Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery at The University of Tasmania in 1993 and became a fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in 1997.

In 2015 she completed her Natural Family Planning Medical Consultant course in the Creighton Model System of Fertility Care in Omaha, Nebraska and became an accredited Fertility Care Medical Consultant with the American Academy of Fertility Care in 2017.

In 2014, she co-founded Fertility Fundamentals – a fertility clinic in Adelaide offering NaPro Technology services to assist those with fertility issues. She now works part-time with Fertility Fundamentals whilst continuing in General Practice.



## Saturday 28 October

### Amanda Bowen BEd (Early Childhood), UNDA

Amanda (Mandie) Bowen lives in Perth, Western Australia with her husband John and the youngest of their four children.

Mandie's background is education, with a specialisation in Early Childhood. She has taught in remote Aboriginal communities, rural and regional Western Australia, as well as outer metropolitan Perth. She is currently undertaking studies at the John Paul II Institute, Melbourne in a Graduate Diploma of Theological Studies, specialising in Marriage and Family.

After hearing Drs John and Lyn Billings speak in Perth in the early 1990's, Mandie was asked by her then Parish Priest to train as a Billings Ovulation Method® teacher. Her inspiration has always been the relationship of love and devotion she observed between Drs John and Lyn.

Mandie is an accredited Senior Teacher of the Billings Ovulation Method®. She joined the Education Committee of OMR&RCA in 2016 and is currently the Convenor of the Education Committee.



**Edwina Gotz**  
FCP BSc BAppSc(Clin Sc)  
BOsteoSc GradDip(Ex Rehab)  
GradDip(Tert Ed) FertilityCare  
Practitioner, Melbourne

*See biography in Friday speaker details.*



**Terri Vyner**  
BSN RN MBioethics FCP

Terri lives in Melbourne. She works part time at St Vincent's Public Hospital while homeschooling her young children.



**Bee Teh**  
RN RM

Bee was trained as a nurse and midwife. She is currently employed by CatholicCare.

Sydney's Natural Fertility Services. She is involved in Recruitment and Training for Natural Fertility Services in Sydney and is currently the Vice President the Australian Council of Natural Family Planning (ACNFP) and is a member of their Training Committee.



**Monica Vane**  
RN RM BNursing

Monica has been a midwife for 35 years and has experience in all areas of midwifery practice. Having worked for 10 years as a Lactation Consultant, Monica and 2 other Lactation Consultants established the Breastfeeding Support Centre at the Mater Mothers Hospital, Brisbane. She also practised for several years in midwifery education as a Clinical Midwifery Facilitator. Since 2011 Monica has worked in the Fertility Service at the Mater Mothers Hospital in Brisbane and gained accreditation as a Natural Fertility Educator in 2012. Monica is involved in a number of clinical research trials for Pregnancy Achieving, Pregnancy Maintenance and Threatened Miscarriage which are being conducted by the Fertility Service at Mater Health. In 2013 Monica trekked the Great Wall of China for 5 days with the Mater Foundation team to raise funds for fertility research at Mater.



**Gillian Barker**  
Senior Billings Ovulation Method®  
Teacher

She worked in the laboratory headed by Professor James Brown where the hormonal validation of the Billings Ovulation Method® was completed. She was involved in the development of the Ovarian Hormone Monitor and it was through this work that she became involved in the Billings Ovulation Method® and subsequently trained as a teacher. Gillian worked on developing the curricula for the advanced training for Billings Ovulation Method® teachers and is involved in the ongoing development of programs and PowerPoint presentations for training both teachers and medical professionals. She has travelled to China, Pakistan and the USA to conduct teacher training programs and speak at Conferences. Gillian currently works for the University of Melbourne at the Mercy Hospital for Women on research into Premature Labour and Gestational Diabetes Mellitus and is a Director of WOOMB International Ltd, the global organisation for the Billings Ovulation Method®.



**Carla Chigwidden**  
BEd(Pri) GradDiplnEd MECed

Carla lives in Wagga Wagga, NSW with her husband, four children and a stray rooster. She has been an instructor of the Billings Ovulation Method® for four years and works at the Natural Fertility Clinic at The O&G Centre of the Riverina, in Wagga. Carla's teaching experience includes working with a range of ages including early childhood, preschool and primary children. Before teaching she was a youth worker and cared for at-risk children and teens in Out Of Home Care. She then taught in a special school for kids with behavioural and emotional disorders, before switching to fertility education.



**Teresa Baker**  
RM BSc(Hons) Clinical Midwife,  
Mater Hospital, Brisbane

Teresa has been a midwife for 11 years, and has experience in all areas of midwifery. Originally from the UK, Teresa moved to Australia in April 2014, where she soon started work in the Fertility Service, at the Mater Mothers Hospital in Brisbane. Teresa gained provisional accreditation as a Natural Fertility Educator (STM) in 2016. Teresa is involved in a number of clinical research trials for Pregnancy Achieving and Maintenance, including threatened miscarriage, which are being conducted by the Fertility Service at the Mater in Brisbane.



**Cathryn Marshall**  
RN FCP

Cathryn Marshall has been a registered nurse for more than 30 years and completed her Creighton Model FertilityCare Practitioner training in February 2017. Cathryn now teaches CrMS at Priceless Life Fertility Care, a pregnancy support organisation in Queensland.



# NOTES

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**We acknowledge and thank our sponsors:**

*International Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine*  
*Australian Catholic University*  
*John Paul II Institute, Melbourne*  
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