

AUCKLAND FERTILITY SUPPORT SERIES

WHAT IS THE FERTILITY SUPPORT SERIES?

Fertility New Zealand Fertility Support Series has been established to connect people who are walking the journey of infertility, providing participants with opportunities to share and discuss the challenges, highs and lows associated with fertility issues and treatment.

WHO CAN GO TO THE FERTILITY SUPPORT SERIES?

The Fertility Support Series is for couples and single people who are yet to have their first child. We encourage couples to attend together, but this is not a requirement. Groups generally have between 10-14 people in total, although this can vary.

WHAT IS COVERED IN THE SESSIONS?

At the first meeting the facilitators will take a lead role in introducing themselves and they will share with participants their own story about their experiences with infertility/treatment.

Group participants will then be invited to share something about their own story. You are free to share as little or as much as you feel comfortable with and can either do it individually or as a couple.

While the feedback we receive from participants suggests to us that Fertility Support Series play a therapeutic role because of the connections established between participants, the groups are not counselling groups.

Other subjects we may cover during the three sessions are:

- Why don't we talk about infertility problems?
- What are some of the myths of infertility?
- What are some of the unhelpful comments others make when they hear about our fertility problems?
- What are some ways we might respond or deal with these myths or comments?
- Differences in dealing with infertility issues for men and women
- Coping strategies for managing challenges relating to work, family, relationships, family gatherings, events
- Negative or frustrating aspects of treatment
- How has infertility changed each person or given them a different perspective on life?
- Alternative treatments/other options, e.g. adoption, egg/sperm donor, surrogacy (as relevant for participants of each group)
- Lack of control about infertility
- Any other specific areas of interest to the group

Please note, our support groups are places for gaining support, sharing experiences and learning coping mechanisms, not for gaining technical / medical information – such questions are best directed to your fertility provider or the Fertility New Zealand support phone number or email address.

WHO RUNS THE FERTILITY SUPPORT SERIES?

The Fertility Support Series is facilitated by two Fertility New Zealand volunteers. Our facilitators have their own personal experiences with infertility and treatment – in some cases, this has resulted in them now having a child or children in their family, in others not. While they have undergone training in facilitating a group, they are not professional counsellors. Rather, their role is to create a safe environment, giving an outline for each meeting and providing support and advice when required.

ARE THE GROUPS CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes, absolutely. Fertility is a very personal and private issue and it is fundamental that all attendees respect the confidentiality of others and their stories. The facilitators understand this and will discuss confidentiality with attendees as part of the first session, including any limitations that may apply where safety issues arise.

WHEN, WHERE AND HOW LONG DO THE GROUPS RUN FOR?

Groups run for three consecutive weeks, each session is two-hours and is held on a Tuesday evening at the Parnell Community Centre, 545 Parnell Road.

IS THERE A COST FOR ATTENDING THE GROUP?

The suggested koha is \$15 per person or \$30 per couple, which covers all three sessions. This is a contribution to the costs associated with running the groups. Payment of the attendance fee will secure your registration for the Group and is therefore required to be paid before the group starts.

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR THE GROUP?

1. Email fssauckland@fertilitynz.org.nz and request a registration form.
 - Fertility Support Series (FSS) coordinator to get in touch with you regarding confirmation of details and registration. This should be a number you are comfortable having a message left on, if the organiser is not able to reach you in the first instance
2. Make koha payment to the Fertility NZ Bank Account, the details of which will be provided to you following your completed registration form. Please ensure that you reference your name when you make your payment of \$15.00 (SINGLE) or \$30.00 (COUPLE).
3. The FSS coordinator will be in touch with you to confirm your place on the Group and provide final details.

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE GROUPS THEY HAVE ATTENDED?

During the final meeting we will ask you to complete an evaluation form. It is important to us that our groups are meeting the needs of participants, so your feedback is appreciated. Here are a few comments from the feedback we have had from others about the groups...

“Really good facilitators made the sessions comfortable and inviting”

“I found it most beneficial sharing experiences, connecting with others and realising that you are not alone”

“Was very nervous at the start, made to feel welcome and supported in safe environment. Learnt a lot. Gained friends and coping strategies!”