



CLINICAL EVALUATION STUDY



Flowering Fertility Support was founded by Clare Mansfield and Shane McCarthy following their own deeply personal fertility journey. Combining lived experience with evidence-informed support, Flowering Fertility provides an innovative eight-week online support programme designed to complement clinical fertility care.

The programme supports individuals and couples trying to conceive, those undergoing fertility treatment or donor conception, solo parents by choice, LGBTQ+ families and male partners. Through expert-led education, emotional wellbeing resources and peer support, the programme empowers participants to navigate fertility with greater confidence, knowledge and resilience.



Clare Mansfield, Co-founder

About Femtech @ HIHI

FemTech focuses on women's health and includes conditions that affect **women only** such as fertility, menstruation, menopause, gynaecological health; conditions that affect **women disproportionately** to men (neurological, autoimmune conditions, osteoporosis etc) and conditions that affect **women differently** to men (heart disease, osteoporosis etc).

Health Innovation Hub Ireland's FemTech initiative stimulates and supports the development of high potential new products, services and start-ups. Impacting the health and wellbeing of 50% of the Irish population and is building an ecosystem of experts and entrepreneurs supporting, driving and innovating in women's health.

Femtech @ HIHI provides access to key clinical experts through our partnership with Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (CUMH) and supports the development of new products at idea-stage, prototype-stage and delivers pilots of market-ready products.



The Healthcare Challenge

For many people, infertility is far more than a medical condition. It is an emotionally demanding journey often characterised by stress, uncertainty, grief and isolation. While excellent clinical fertility services exist, emotional and psychosocial support is not always consistently available throughout the patient pathway.

People frequently report feeling overwhelmed by complex treatment decisions, uncertain about their options and lacking opportunities to connect with others experiencing similar challenges. Many described existing fertility services as primarily focused on the clinical aspects of care, with comparatively limited support for emotional wellbeing, resilience and self-advocacy. There is a growing recognition that fertility care should adopt a more holistic, person-centred approach that supports both the physical and emotional needs of patients.



The Healthcare Solution



Flowering Fertility Support developed an innovative digital programme designed to bridge this gap by providing structured emotional, educational and practical support alongside existing fertility services. Delivered over eight weeks, the programme combines:

- Expert-led fertility education
- Emotional wellbeing and coping strategies
- Practical guidance throughout the fertility journey
- Reflection and mindfulness activities
- A professionally facilitated peer-support community
- Flexible online access with recorded sessions

Rather than replacing clinical care, the programme is designed to work alongside fertility clinics and healthcare professionals, helping patients feel more emotionally supported and better equipped to navigate their treatment journey.

HIHI Role

Through its Femtech programme, Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) partnered with Flowering Fertility Support to independently evaluate the feasibility, usability and perceived impact of the programme. HIHI designed and led a mixed-methods evaluation that included participant surveys before and after the programme together with in-depth qualitative interviews. Ethical approval was obtained through University College Cork, ensuring the evaluation met robust research and governance standards. The evaluation explored participants' experiences, emotional wellbeing, confidence, empowerment, knowledge and overall satisfaction while also identifying opportunities for future development and wider implementation.



Outcome Report

The independent evaluation demonstrated highly encouraging results. Participants consistently reported that the programme:

- reduced feelings of isolation and emotional distress.
- increased confidence when engaging with fertility services.
- improved understanding of fertility treatment options.
- enhanced emotional resilience and coping strategies.
- created a safe, compassionate community where participants felt understood and supported.
- empowered individuals to advocate more confidently for themselves throughout their fertility journey.

Many participants described the emotional support provided as the "missing piece" in their fertility care, with several continuing to use techniques learned during the programme months after completion.

The evaluation concluded that Flowering Fertility Support has significant potential as an innovative adjunct to existing fertility services, helping to deliver more holistic, compassionate and patient-centred fertility care.

Testimonials

"Working with Health Innovation Hub Ireland has been an invaluable experience for Flowering Fertility Support. From the outset, Michael and the HIHI team brought professionalism, expertise and genuine encouragement to the project. Their independent evaluation has provided robust evidence of the positive impact of our programme and has given us greater confidence and credibility as we continue to grow."

The evaluation has not only validated the need for holistic emotional support alongside clinical fertility care, but it has also given us valuable insights that will help shape the future development of the programme. We are incredibly grateful for HIHI's support and would highly recommend the process to any health innovator looking to strengthen their evidence base and demonstrate real-world impact."

Clare Mansfield, Co-founder, Flowering Fertility Support



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