

**HESTA Australian Nursing Awards**  
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Media Release  
23 April 2012

## Fertility education for women over 30 recognised

Sex education is not just for teenagers according to Wendy Abigail, a lecturer at Flinders University's School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Dr Abigail has just been named a finalist in the innovation category of the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards for a research-based, partnership-driven project to educate women aged over 30 about fertility issues.

While this age group might be assumed to know it all when it comes to sex, Dr Abigail's PhD research — and a rising local abortion rate amongst this demographic — proved otherwise.

"There are all these myths that by the time a woman is 30 she knows everything about sex and contraception, but having worked in the area it's just not the case at all," Dr Abigail said.

"Most women go through sex education classes at age 13, 14 or 15, so their information might be 15 years out of date by the time they reach 30.

"This is an age where women may have young children and they might feel uncomfortable talking with their GP about sex and fertility with children in the room.

"We also see a lot of women returning to the dating scene in their 30s after long relationships. The contraception they used with a long-term partner might not be appropriate with a new partner, so we need to find ways to share sensitive information appropriately."

Dr Abigail said the demographic was time poor and hard to reach, which led to the creation of four 29-second online videos to raise awareness of sexual and reproductive health issues, and where to go for the latest information.

The clips can be used for community announcements on television, in GP waiting rooms, on health websites and in cinemas. Although primarily designed for local use, the clips have already attracted national attention.

Dr Abigail is one of five finalists in the Innovation in Nursing category of the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

The winners will be announced at a gala dinner in Melbourne on Thursday 10 May. Interstate finalists will be flown to Melbourne for the event.

The Innovation in Nursing winner will receive a \$10,000 grant to develop their service or program.

The prize money is provided by ME Bank, a supporter of the awards since 2008.

HESTA is one of Australia's largest superannuation funds with more than 730,000 members. It is chosen by more people working in health and community services than any other fund.

Visit [hestaawards.com](http://hestaawards.com) to book tickets for the event or learn more about the awards.

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