

## **How do Australian GPs and GP registrars choose the mental health specialists they refer their patients to?**

(Griffith University ethics reference number: 2021/825)

### **Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form**

#### **Who is conducting the research?**

- Professor Gerard Gill, Clinical Professor of General Practice, Deakin University
- Professor Kyra Hamilton, School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University
- Professor Reece Hinchcliff, School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University
- Professor Paul Harris, School of Health Sciences and Social Work, Griffith University
- Tyson John, Master of Mental Health Practice student, School of Health Sciences and Social Work, Griffith University

#### **What is this research about?**

This study aims to understand how general practitioners (GPs) and general practice registrars choose the most suitable mental health specialist to refer their patients to. Mental health referrals involve not only deciding whether a patient needs to see a specialist, but also deciding which specialist each patient should see. This decision is crucial to providing effective mental health care, given that each specialist offers differing qualities of care. However, there is still little we know about what motivates GPs and GP registrars to refer to particular mental health specialists.

#### **Who is eligible to participate?**

Australian GPs and GP registrars who have made a mental health referral in the past 12 months are eligible to participate in this study.

#### **What you will be asked to do**

You are invited to volunteer to participate in a semi-structured videocall interview via Microsoft Teams which should take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete. The interviews will be audio recorded for transcribing purposes. If you choose to participate, you will also be asked to complete a brief 11-question questionnaire prior to your interview.

#### **Do I have to participate?**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you may decline to participate if you wish. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without comment or consequences of any kind. If you choose to withdraw from this research, we will remove all of your information from the data that we have collected from you. However, once we have commenced data analysis, you will then no longer be able to withdraw from the study.

#### **Benefits of this research**

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Australian GPs choose mental health specialists to refer their patients to. A greater understanding of this decision-

making process may be crucial to the development of educational and organisational interventions, such as referral guidelines, that ensure GPs refer patients to the most suitable mental health specialists.

Your time is valuable to us. All participants will receive a gift card (valued at \$100) in appreciation of their participation.

### **Anticipated risks**

There are no anticipated risks. All participant information collected will be de-identified and your responses will not be revealed to third parties.

### **Confidentiality and privacy**

Any information that can identify you will remain anonymous. The identifying details will be stored in a separate data file. The research results may be disseminated via research reports, journal articles and conferences presentations. In any published information arising for the project, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only summarised data will be made publicly available so as to maintain your confidentiality at all times. Interview audio recordings will only be available to the research team and will be destroyed once transcribed. As required by Griffith University, all research data will be retained in a password-protected electronic file at Griffith University for a minimum of five (5) years. At this time, all results will be destroyed.

### **Reporting of findings**

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your de-identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet any government, legal, or other regulatory authority requirements. Your anonymity will be at all times be safeguarded. For further information please consult the Griffith University Privacy Plan at: <http://www.griffith.edu.au/privacy-plan>.

### **Ethical clearance**

This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (2007). Any concerns about the conduct of this research project should be directed to the Manager, Research Ethics, Office for Research via phone (07 3735 4375) or email ([research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au)). Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

### **Consent**

Research staff will contact you to book an interview and send you a link to complete a preinterview online questionnaire.

The submission of the online survey will be accepted as an expression of consent to participate in the survey component of the study. At the beginning of your interview, research staff will verbally confirm your consent to participate in the interview component of this project. Your consent will be digitally recorded and stored for the duration of the project.

If you proceed with participating in this project, then you will be agreeing that you:

- Have had any questions about the study answered to your satisfaction;
- Understand the risks involved;
- Understand that your participation is voluntary;
- Understand that if you have any additional questions that you can contact the research team;
- Understand that you are free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty;
- Understand that you can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on (07) 3735 4375 (or [researchethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@griffith.edu.au)) if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- Understand that your involvement in this research will include one interview and one pre-interview survey, that your interview will be digitally recorded, and that you will receive a gift card (valued at \$100) in appreciation of your time.

### **Feedback**

If you would like a summary of the study results, please email the research team ([gp.research@griffith.edu.au](mailto:gp.research@griffith.edu.au)). Feedback will be available at the conclusion of the study.

### **Questions/ further information**

Should you have any further questions about this research please do not hesitate to contact the research team ([gp.research@griffith.edu.au](mailto:gp.research@griffith.edu.au)).