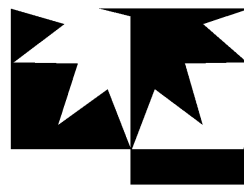


# RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET



University of the  
Sunshine Coast

Dear Volunteer,

We would like to invite you to participate in an applied research project, with HREC approval number S14719, being conducted on the following topic:

*'The professional behaviours, perceptions and opinions of Australian paramedics towards infection control in the out-of-hospital environment'.*

Participation in this research study is voluntary, and the information below is supplied to enable you to decide whether to do so. You do not need to give any reason if you decide not to participate. Furthermore, if you decide to take part in the research project, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the need to provide an explanation, in which case any information pertaining to you will be excluded from the analysis.

## **What is the Purpose of this Study?**

Over the last two decades the scope of practice of paramedics working across Australia has evolved rapidly. Today paramedics are qualified to conduct invasive medical procedures in the emergency setting. The invasive procedures performed include venepuncture, intravenous and interosseous needle placement, needle thoracotomy, intubation, open fracture reduction, haemorrhage control, and suturing. This presents unique challenges for infection control by paramedics, particularly when the medical procedures are conducted in hostile, unpleasant and disorganised environments

All health-care agencies are affected by the emergence and transmission of pathogenic microorganisms. Yet, little is known of the value paramedics place on infection control within their practices. Research is needed to identify how paramedics manage the risk of transmission of pathogens in their workplace.

The aim of this study is to canvass Australian paramedics about their practices to maintain infection control in the out-of-hospital environment. The outcomes from this study should inform ambulance authorities in Australia whether there is a need to implement improved infection control guidelines for their paramedic staff working in the out-of-hospital environment and inform the development of educational resources.

## **Description of the Research Project?**

This research study is the fourth part of a PhD study. The first three phases included: a content analysis of national infection control documents and state ambulance operating procedures; semi-structured interviews of key experts in infection control and ambulance management; and a survey questionnaire of paramedics on infection control practices and perceptions.

As a paramedic member of Paramedics Australasia, we invite you to participate in a focus group to discuss the concept of infection control in the paramedic work setting and how it may differ to practices in the hospital or laboratory environments. The focus group will be held at 17:00 to 18:00 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at Victoria University room C209 Footscray Park campus, immediately prior to the Victorian Paramedics Australasia meeting. The focus group will take no longer than 1-hour.

With your permission, we would like to record and transcribe the discussion from the focus group to enable critical review and analysis. The information that we obtain from you during the focus group will be de-identified and kept confidential and secure.

### **Consent to participate in the study**

We will regard the returning an RSVP by email to the focus group invitation and attendance at the focus group as giving your consent to participate.

### **Who are the Research Investigators?**

Name	Position and Contact	Expertise
Mr Nigel Barr (Principal Investigator)	Lecturer (Clinical), Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast. (07) 54565020. <a href="mailto:nbarr@usc.edu.au">nbarr@usc.edu.au</a>	Paramedic lecturer Research into learning and teaching of paramedicine, and infection control practices of paramedics
Dr Mark Holmes (Co-investigator)	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast. (07) 5430 2844. <a href="mailto:mholmes@usc.edu.au">mholmes@usc.edu.au</a>	Discipline Leader for Biomedical science. Research into metabolic, clinical and nutritional biochemistry
Dr Anne Roiko (Co-investigator)	Associate Professor, School of Medicine, Griffith University (07) 5552 7870 <a href="mailto:a.roiko@griffith.edu.au">a.roiko@griffith.edu.au</a>	Program Director- Bachelor of Environmental Health Research into water-related health risks and the transfer of risk-based evidence into policy, the impacts of climate change on health risks and climate change adaptation.
Dr Bill Lord (Co-investigator)	Associate Professor, Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast. (07) 54594875. <a href="mailto:w.lord@usc.edu.au">w.lord@usc.edu.au</a>	Discipline Leader Paramedic Science Research into learning and teaching of paramedicine, and paramedic pain management practices

### **Are There Any Risks or Benefits to Participating?**

There is a minimal chance that you will be affected through participation in the research project. There will be no judgements made on your responses and your responses will be kept private and confidential. Your privacy will be respected at all times. You will be able to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons, in which case any information pertaining to you will be excluded from the data analysis.

Any information obtained or provided by you during the course of the study will be used only for the purposes of the research project. All information that is provided for this research project by participants will be de-identified and stored under lock to achieve complete confidentiality of information. This information will only be accessible by the research team.

Through collecting this information, our research team hopes to characterise the behaviours, perceptions and opinions of Australian paramedics towards infection control practices. There is a paucity of research information studying the possible role of Australian paramedics in the transmission of pathogenic microorganisms. The research team expects to use the outcomes of the study to develop further research questions in this very important health area. The research findings from this project will be reported in a PhD thesis and it is envisaged that the outcomes will be published in a scientific journal and/or presented at professional conferences.

### **Further Information**

You are advised to take your time to think about whether you wish to participate in this study. If you decide that you would like to participate, then we would like you to provide consent as outlined above. If you have any concerns about this research, or you would like any further information regarding the research topic, then please feel free to call any of the research investigators on the contact number/e-mail addresses provided above. We would be very happy to answer any questions that you may have. In addition after analysis of the focus group discussions an aggregated format of the findings will be available. You will be able to obtain this information by emailing the principle investigator on [nbarr@usc.edu.au](mailto:nbarr@usc.edu.au).

On behalf of our research group and the University of the Sunshine Coast, I would like to thank you for assisting in this project.

Yours sincerely

Mr Nigel Barr

***If you have any complaints about the way this research project is being conducted you can either raise them with the Principal Investigator or, if you prefer an independent person, contact the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Sunshine Coast: c/- The Committees Officer, University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore DC 4558; telephone (07) 54594574***