

Participant Information Sheet

The project is led by the Australian National University. The team conducting this project are shown in the table below

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Title: COVID-19 involvement survey for MAE alumni and Scholars

Summary:

Description: The MAE Program at Australian National University (ANU) was established in 1991 in response to a recognised gap in field epidemiology training in Australia. It was based on the highly successful American Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) program. The MAE remains Australia's only internationally accredited Field Epidemiology Training Program. As at July 2019, ANU had trained over 250 MAE scholars from diverse backgrounds, including medicine, nursing, psychology, veterinary medicine, microbiology, policy, and life sciences. The 2019 and 2020 MAE graduate cohorts includes 25 Australian scholars and 7 local ASEAN scholars (funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade from 2019).

MAE graduates have gone on to work in senior roles in health departments at local, state, national and international levels, as well as in research institutions and academia. **Many alumni and students are currently at the forefront of the national COVID-19 response.**

We are interested in collecting stories about how MAE trainees and graduates have been involved in local, regional and international response to COVID-19, particularly related to the emergency preparedness and response pillars (outlined in the WHO COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan). Using this information, the ANU MAE program will collaborate on a manuscript describing how MAE scholars and alumni have contributed to the COVID-19 response locally and globally and utilise information to assist with future planning for MAE curriculum, funding and workforce requirements.

Who will complete the survey: We are inviting ANU MAE alumni and current scholars to participate. The MAE team maintains a network of past students, the survey website page link will be sent to MAE alumni using the alumni email list and to current scholars via their ANU student email.

How will we use the information you give us by filling in the survey: Responses in the survey will be combined to provide us with an overall picture of the roles and involvement of MAE alumni and scholars in the COVID-19 pandemic throughout Australia and our region. This will assist us with understanding the scope and impact that the ANU MAE alumni and epidemiology scholars has contributed to both state, country, regional and international epidemiology support during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also provide useful information and data to assist NCEPH and the MAE team to promote the program and assist the program curriculum planning, budgeting and funding into the future.

We will not be collecting any names or information that can identify you. We will ask for some information about you such as your whether you are a MAE alumni and which year you commenced or if you are a current scholar. If you wish to contact us to discuss this survey you can do so using the contact details provided, we will not record you name or link your details to any information or data.

What we will ask from you:

This is voluntary – which means you can choose not to do any parts of the survey: We ask people to fill in the survey on a voluntary basis – this means you don't have to fill it in if you don't want to. You can also stop filling in the survey at any time and your information will not be used by us. However, once the survey is completed and submitted it is not possible to withdraw any answers due to the fact that the survey is conducted without being able to identify who filled it in. Please read this information carefully and feel free to ask us questions about anything you don't understand or would like to know more about using the contact details at the end of this information sheet. Refusal to participate or withdraw from the survey will have no effect on the students MAE participation.

What would we like you to do? We are asking you to complete an on-line survey about your role in response to COVID-19. This should take no more than 20 -30 minutes.

This is the first survey of two surveys we intend to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can decide to complete this survey only and/or the second survey.

If you don't want to be contacted, you can simply say no and we will not ask for any personal details and will not contact you.

Where and for how long will this study to on: This study will be conducted online in July-August 2020. A link to the MAE website where the survey link is accessible will sent via email to MAE alumni who have their contact details included on the MAE alumni email list or are current scholars. MAE

scholars and students are located throughout Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific as well as in international organisations, such as WHO, internationally. We will send another survey at the end of the pandemic (as defined by the Commonwealth Department of Health) through the same networks and to those who have provided us with permission to contact them again. This will also be voluntary. You can choose whether you would like to complete the second survey at a later date.

Will I experience any risk? This survey includes questions related to your role as an epidemiologist throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Although participation in this survey provides minimal risk and all information will be handled confidentially you should consider that you may be identifiable from your circumstances and/or remarks and refrain from stating anything regarding your role or position that may put you at risk. Participation in this survey is not connected in any manner to a student's assessment or a requirement.

This **can be a distressing time for many**. There are resources on [COVID-19 support](#) from the Government with information on how you can support yourself, your family and others during this difficult time. You can contact the **National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080** 24hrs per day, seven days per week. There are many [digital mental health services](#) that you can access online or over the phone, or you can connect with a health professional such as your GP, a psychologist, or other mental health professional. You can also seek support from **Lifeline 0477 131114** and for younger people in your family **kidshelpline 1800551800**. Additional support can be found through [Head to Health and Beyond Blue](#) (phone: **1300 22 4636**).

For ANU staff and students please contact the **ANU Crisis Support team on 1300050327** or you can contact the team **via text at 0488884170**. Further information is available from [ANU Support](#).

What will be the benefit of me filling in this survey: By filling in this survey you will help us understand the scope and impact that MAE alumni and scholars have had during COVID-19. We expect the findings from this study to be used to assist the MAE team at ANU to plan curriculum, complete a summary manuscript for publication and develop the program to prepare graduate epidemiologists to prepare, respond and research COVID-19 and other future infectious disease epidemics.

Confidentiality:

The specific information you share with us will be treated as confidentially as the law allows and will not be shared outside the research group. The answers you provide in your survey will be combined with the answers others provide in their surveys and this information will be summarised to make general statements about what roles, responsibilities, scope and impact MAE alumni and scholars have and are continuing to contribute to the local and global response to COVID-19.

Privacy Notice:

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy contains information about how a person can:

- Access or seek correction to their personal information;
- Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007

How will the survey data be stored?

The data from this study will be stored on a password protected computer at the Australian National University. Data in a de-identified format will be stored for a period of at least five years from the date of any publication arising from the research.

How do I ask questions and report concerns?

Please feel free to contact the team leader, Dr Samantha Colquhoun if you have any questions or want to report any concerns. Her contact details are below.

Contact Details for More Information:

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Ethics Committee clearance:

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (2020/201). If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee
The Australian National University
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427
Email: Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au