

## Participant Information Sheet

### Researcher:

This study is being led by Professor Philip Batterham from the Australian National University. The research team includes researchers from the Black Dog Institute, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, and University of Sydney. Please see the end of this document for a full list of the researchers on this project.

**Project Title:** The LifeTrack Project: Understanding suicidal transitions

### General Outline of the Project:

- **Description and Methodology:** We don't yet understand why some people who experience suicidal thoughts will attempt suicide while others do not. The aim of this project is to investigate factors that influence changes in suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts over time.

To identify these factors, we will ask people who have recently experienced suicidal thoughts to complete several online surveys about their suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, self-harm, mental health, alcohol and drug use, and other topics over a period of three years. The surveys will include questions about whether you have experienced certain stressful life events (including sexual assault or other violence towards yourself or others). We intend to use this information to identify new targets for interventions designed to prevent and reduce suicide attempts and suicide deaths.

Participants will be invited to complete an initial survey 2 days after signing up for the study. Participants will then be asked to complete a follow-up survey every six months for the next three years. Completing these surveys on a desktop computer, laptop, or tablet is likely to be preferable to using a phone. After some of the surveys (the initial survey, the 12-month survey, and the 24-month survey), participants will also be asked to complete additional brief surveys (2 mins) each day for a week.

- **Participants:** We plan to survey 842 participants who have experienced suicidal thoughts in the past 30 days. Participants must be fluent in English, aged 18 years or older, living in Australia, and able to access a device and an internet connection. Participants must be willing to provide a first name, phone number and email address for themselves and a first name and email address for a trusted contact person (see "Contact details if in distress" on page 4 for more detail). People who have had a suicide attempt in the past 30 days, or who do not have the ability to participate in a long-term study, will not be eligible to participate in the study.
- **Use of Data and Feedback:** The information collected will be presented as group summaries (in aggregate form) for the purpose of publication in academic journals, reports and conference presentations. Findings will be presented with no reference to individuals. Results will also be summarised in regular emails to participants, on the [LifeTrack page on the Australian National University web site](#), and upon request from the investigators.
- **Project Funding:** This research is funded by a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (Grant ID GA259012). The study is the responsibility of the Australian National University and does not reflect the views of NHMRC.

### Participant Involvement:

- **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal:** Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is completely up to you whether or not you participate. If you do participate, you do not have to answer all the questions, although you will be asked to complete questions related to the primary outcomes of the study (suicidal ideation and attempts) and questions that allow us to assess your eligibility. You can withdraw from the study without giving a reason by contacting the research team at any time before your data is included in analyses. If you choose to withdraw, your data will be deleted unless you ask us to keep it. If you stop participating in the study but do not request to withdraw, we will use the de-identified data that you have provided unless you ask us to delete it.
- **What does participation in the research entail?** The study involves a three-year commitment. If you choose to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete the initial online survey 2 days after signing up for the study. You will then be recontacted every six months for three years to complete follow-up surveys. After some of the surveys (the initial survey, the 12-month survey, and the 24-month survey), you will also be asked to complete an additional brief mobile survey (2 mins) each day for a week.

The survey questions will cover topics such as thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts, self-harm, mental health and mental health treatment, alcohol and drug use, and whether you have experienced certain stressful life events (including sexual assault or other violence towards yourself or others). You will also be asked demographic questions about yourself, including your age, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship status, education, employment status, and ethnicity. We are asking for your sensitive personal information to help us understand if different groups have different responses to suicidal distress. This information will be used in statistical analyses and will be protected in the same way as the rest of the data.

We will ask you to provide your email address and phone number. Please ensure you provide an email address that only you have access to. If you use an email address that includes your full name and/or other identifying information, you may be individually identifiable in the dataset. Your contact information will only be used for the purposes of inviting you to complete follow-up questionnaires, providing you with feedback about the study results, and checking your welfare if we don't hear from you for a while.

**Support Person Contact Details:** We will also ask you to provide contact information for a nominated support person. In the event that you haven't completed a survey or responded to our email or phone call within 2 weeks of receiving a survey invitation, we will email your nominated contact person to check your safety. Please speak with your contact person before starting the study so that they know you are participating and that we may contact them. You will also need their permission to provide us with their name and contact details.

- **Location and Duration:** All surveys will be conducted online. You will be asked to complete a total of seven surveys at six-month intervals, plus one week of daily brief mobile surveys after the initial survey, the 12-month survey, and the 24-month survey (i.e., 21 daily surveys over the 3-year study period). The initial survey is estimated to take 25-30 minutes, the 6-, 18- and 30-month surveys are estimated to take 15-20 minutes, and the 12-, 24- and 36-month assessments will take 20-25 minutes. The daily surveys are estimated to take around 2 minutes each. The total time requested of you in this research is 3–3.5 hours over three years.

- **Remuneration:** In recognition of your time, you will receive an e-gift card after completing each of the main surveys: \$25 if you complete the initial survey and an extra \$5 if you also complete at least two brief mobile surveys in the subsequent week, \$25 at six months, \$30 at 12 months, \$35 at 18 months, \$40 at 24 months, \$40 at 30 months, and \$50 at 36 months. The gift card amounts are based on the length of each survey and the overall time commitment to the study to date at each time point. Please note that you will not receive multiple payments if you complete the same survey multiple times.
- **Risks:** Answering questions about sensitive topics such as suicide and mental health can be difficult or upsetting. Remember that your participation in the project is entirely voluntary. If you find that you are experiencing any distress in relation to the present study, please do not hesitate to contact the project team (contact details below), your local health provider or Lifeline Australia (13 11 14). You can skip survey questions or withdraw from the study at any time. A list of mental health service contacts is also provided for you below. The study does not require you to stop or change any mental health treatment you are currently receiving, nor does it prevent you from starting any new mental health treatments. We encourage you to continue any current treatment and/or seek treatment and support if needed.
- **Benefits:** This study will help us to understand why some people with suicidal thoughts recover and other people attempt suicide. We intend to use this information to design clinical trials that test novel and tailored therapies for people experiencing suicidal thoughts, and improve targeting of existing community-based suicide prevention programs. Your participation may not benefit you directly, but it may contribute to improving suicide prevention services in the future. We anticipate that benefits may also flow to people experiencing suicidal thoughts, policy makers, and government and non-government organisations that fund suicide prevention services.

#### Exclusion criteria:

- **Participant Limitation:** All participants must be Australian residents who are fluent in English and aged 18 years or older. Participants will have experienced suicidal thoughts in the past 30 days and have the ability to participate in a long-term study. Participants will not have a recent suicide attempt (past 30 days).

#### Confidentiality:

- **Confidentiality:** We will protect participants' confidentiality to the full extent allowed by law. This means the research team will not disclose your personal information unless there is risk of harm to you or someone else or we are required to do so by law. The research manager, research officer, and project clinical psychologist will have access to your contact information to facilitate call-backs from the project clinical psychologist where necessary. Data will be pooled for analysis and reporting to protect individuals' privacy.

#### Privacy Notice:

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_010007](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007) and it 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.

### Data Storage:

- **Where:** Survey responses will be stored on secure password-protected servers. Only the researchers listed on the ethics protocol will have access to survey data. After data collection is completed, contact information that may identify you (e.g., email addresses) will be stored separately to your survey responses and ID codes will be used to link each of your surveys together. Only the research team will have access to these materials.
- **How long:** The data obtained will be stored for a minimum of 5 years from the date of any publication that may result from the present study. After this 5-year period, the data will be de-identified and archived for future use by the research team and other researchers related to the aims of the study.

### Queries and Concerns:

- **Contact Details for More Information:** If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact the research team below. Please keep this information sheet to view later.

#### Chief Investigator – Research

Professor Philip Batterham  
Centre for Mental Health Research  
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T: 02 6125 1031  
Email: [lifetrack@anu.edu.au](mailto:lifetrack@anu.edu.au)

#### Co-Investigator – Research

Dr Monica Gendi  
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The Australian National University  
Email: [lifetrack@anu.edu.au](mailto:lifetrack@anu.edu.au)

- **Contact Details if in Distress:** If you indicate in the surveys that you have recently attempted suicide, the project clinical psychologist will get in touch to provide referral or support. If you don't wish to receive a phone call from the project clinical psychologist, you can opt-out of receiving this call. You may contact the project team directly by phone or email for referral to support or to ask questions about the study. However, please note that the researchers are unable to provide crisis support. The team is available during working hours and return calls may take up to two business days. You can also speak with your local health provider or phone Lifeline Australia on 13 11 14.

**If you need urgent medical help, please phone an ambulance on 000.**

There are also some other numbers that you can call at any time, night or day if you want help and support:

#### 24/7 Crisis Support Lines:

Lifeline Australia (24 hours): 13 11 14, [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call-Back Service (24 hours): 1300 659 467, [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

13 YARN (24 hours; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis supporters): 13 92 76,  
<https://www.13yarn.org.au/>

Standby Support After Suicide (6am to 10pm): 1300 727 247, [www.standbysupport.com.au](http://www.standbysupport.com.au)

#### State-based Crisis Support Lines:

ACT: ACT Mental Health Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (24 hours): 1800 629 354 or (02) 6205 1065.

Northern Territory: Northern Territory Mental Health Line (24 hours): 1800 682 288

NSW: NSW Mental Health Line (24 hours): 1800 011 511

Queensland: Mental Health Access Line (24 hours): 1300 642 255

South Australia: Mental Health Triage Service (24 hours): 13 14 65

Tasmania: Adult Mental Health Service (9am-10pm daily): 1800 332 388

Victoria: SuicideLine Victoria (24/7): 1300 651 251

Western Australia: Mental Health Emergency Response Line (24/7): Perth – 1300 555 788 or Peel region – 1800 676 822

If you are not experiencing a crisis but would like to access some general help and support, you can try contacting some of the services listed below, or visit their websites for information and support.

**Support and Counselling Services:**

*beyondblue* Support Service (24/7): 1300 22 4636, [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

SANE Helpline (9am to 5pm): 1800 187 263, [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org)

Mensline (24/7): 1300 78 99 78, [www.mensline.org.au/](http://www.mensline.org.au/)

Relationships Australia: 1300 364 277, <https://relationships.org.au/about/>

1800 RESPECT (24/7): 1800 737 732, <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

Parent Helplines: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/services-support/about-services-support/helplines>

Roses in the Ocean Peer CARE Companion Warmline call-back service (Peer support from people with lived experience of suicide): 1800 77 7337, [www.rosesintheocean.com.au/sector-priorities-collaborations/peer-care-companion-warmline/](http://www.rosesintheocean.com.au/sector-priorities-collaborations/peer-care-companion-warmline/)

Head to Health (8.30am to 5pm, Mon to Fri): Free mental health advice and support – 1800 595 212, [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

QLife (3pm to 12am, 7 days): Anonymous and free LGBTIQ+ peer support – 1800 184 527, [www qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au)

**Ethics Committee Clearance:**

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2022/851). 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](mailto:Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au)

**Full Researcher List:**

- Professor Phil Batterham, Australian National University
- Professor Helen Christensen, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Professor Alison Clear, Australian National University
- Dr Fiona Shand, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Associate Professor Matthew Sunderland, University of Sydney
- Associate Professor Rohan Borshmann, University of Melbourne
- Associate Professor Michelle Banfield, Australian National University
- Dr Bridianne O’Dea, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Professor Peter Butterworth, Australian National University
- Dr Mark Larsen, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Dr Aliza Werner-Seidler, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Professor Andrew Mackinnon, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Dr Emily Hielscher, QIMR Berghofer
- Dr Jin Han, University of New South Wales
- Dr Kate Chitty, University of Sydney
- Professor Katherine Boydell, Black Dog Institute/University of New South Wales
- Dr Liana Leach, Australian National University
- Dr Louise Farrer, Australian National University
- Dr Dominique Kazan, Australian National University
- Dr Monica Gendi, Australian National University
- Ms Cass Heffernan, Australian National University

Thank you for taking the time to consider this project.

**If you wish to take part, please click “Next”**

This information sheet is for you to keep.