

PFAS Health Study: June, 2018 CRP Progress Report

Study update

Systematic Review

- A manuscript for publication based on the systematic review is in progress.

Voluntary Blood Testing Program

- The Australian National University (ANU) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approved the inclusion of Katherine, NT in the study, as well as the inclusion of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander identifier on the consent form/pathology request form.
- The ANU HERC approved an amendment to the way we will collect retrospective consent from early participants in the DoH's VBTP. The study team will receive all blood test results, contact details and serum samples, and will individually contact participants by mail, supplying the approved information sheet and explaining they can opt out of the study by contacting the study team in writing.
- A shipment of bloods was expected to be sent to ANU on 26 June, there was a delay in shipment and the bloods are now expected to be sent on 2 July.

Component 1 – Focus Groups Study

- The HREC of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Menzies School of Health Research (NTDoH and MSHR) gave conditional approval for the focus group discussions in Katherine. There were a substantial number of conditions and queries. A response has been drafted and is currently under review. Many of the queries related to engagement with the Aboriginal Communities and these issues could not be addressed until the study team had spoken to Aboriginal Elders and researchers in Katherine, which occurred during the community consultation from 18-22 June.

Component 2– Blood Serum Study

- The draft Project Plan is in progress.
- The draft Research Protocol is in progress.

Component 3 – Cross-sectional Study

- The draft Project Plan is in progress.
- The draft Research Protocol is in progress.
- The draft questionnaire is in progress.

Component 4 – Data Linkage Study

- Nothing to report.

Administration

Conferences/Meetings/Presentations

- Katherine Todd and Martyn Kirk held a teleconference on 1 June with representatives from the NSW Hunter New England Public Health Unit to discuss PFAS and risk communication.
- Katherine Todd, Martyn Kirk, Liz Walker, Sue Trevenar, Cathy Banwell and Tambri Housen held a teleconference on 5 June with the Wurlu-Wurlinjang Health Service to discuss the upcoming Community Consultation and ways to best engage the Aboriginal Community.
- The Study team held a teleconference on 8 June to discuss the Blood Serum Study and the Cross-sectional Survey.
- Katherine Todd and Liz Walker held a teleconference on 14 June with an Aboriginal Elder from Katherine, to discuss the PFAS Health Study and the upcoming Community Consultation and Focus Groups Study.
- Katherine Todd and Cathy Banwell attended the Department of Defence Community Walk-in Session in Katherine on 18 June, participated in the shopfront on 19 and 20 June, and held a Community Consultation for Katherine residents and workers on 21 June.
- Cathy Banwell met with an Aboriginal elder on 19 June in Katherine to discuss the upcoming Focus Groups Study and to seek advice on community engagement.
- Katherine Todd met with Department of Defence personnel on 19 June to discuss the PFAS Health Study.
- Katherine Todd attended a Health Professionals meeting in Katherine on 19 June, and gave a brief presentation to attendees about the PFAS Health Study.
- Katherine Todd and Cathy Banwell met with a group of Aboriginal researchers from Flinders University NT, on 20 June to discuss the PFAS Health Study and to seek advice on community engagement.
- Katherine Todd and Cathy Banwell met with PJ Spafford, a GP in Katherine, on 21 June to discuss the PFAS Health Study and provide him with Participant Information Sheets.
- Martyn Kirk, Katherine Todd and Kayla Smurthwaite attended the Interdepartmental Committee Meeting for PFAS at the Department of Health on 28 June. Martyn gave a presentation on the Systematic Review and an update on the overall study.