

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: Community knowledge, attitudes, and practices to the presence of COVID-19 in Australia

Summary:

Description: We are conducting an online survey to understand what people in Australia understand about the current COVID-19 pandemic. We understand there is a lot of information in the media and on social media, some of it accurate and some not.

We want to make sure that people receive the correct information so they can make informed decisions about how to protect themselves and their loved ones from COVID-19.

We are conducting this online survey so that we can then develop communication messages based on what people understand and believe about COVID-19 to correct any misinformation and clarify any knowledge gaps to ensure Australians have accurate information about protecting their health during this pandemic.

Who will complete the survey: We are inviting the Australian public to take the online survey. As Australia's national university, we are interested in the health of our community **Australia-wide**. We have seen a lot of different information in the media and social media on COVID-19 so we are interested in finding out what the **general population in Australia** understand about COVID-19. We want to use this information to develop risk communication messages that address any wrong information and ensure all Australian people living in Australia are provided with accurate information.

We are also interested in knowing where people are getting, and would like to get information about COVID-19 related health.

How will we use the information you give us by filling in the survey: Everyone's responses in the survey will be combined to provide us with an overall picture on what the common beliefs and practices are around COVID-19. We will use this information to create risk communication messages around the way people can protect themselves from COVID-19, and at the same time clarify any incorrect messages people have been receiving.

It is important at this time that everyone knows how to protect themselves and their loved ones and we want to create messages that are accurate, easy to understand and easy for people to access in the ways they prefer.

We will not be collecting any names or information that can identify you, unless you decide to provide this information to us at the end of the survey, but this will not be linked to your answers and all responses will be anonymous. We will ask for some information about you such as your postcode, age and education, and then ask you about your beliefs and practices related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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.

What would we like you to do? We are asking you to complete an online survey about you and your knowledge, beliefs and actions in response to COVID-19. This should take no more than 20 minutes.

We will also ask you at the end of the survey if you mind being contacted for future research related to this project or other projects looking at COVID-19. If you are happy to be contacted, we will ask you to provide us with your name and best contact details. This is the first survey of three we intend to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. **You are not required** to do all three. You can decide to complete only this survey. If you would like the option to complete future surveys, then you can provide us with your contact details at the end of this survey and we will send you the link to the next survey in three to six months' time. You will have the choice then whether you would like to participate in the second survey or not.

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.

We are also hoping to conduct a 30-45-minute interview with 30 people who complete the survey. You will be asked at the end of the survey if you will be happy to be interviewed. This interview will be confidential and will ask more details on how you get your information about COVID-19 and what you think the best way to keep the public informed is. If you answer yes to being happy to be interviewed, we will ask for your name and best contact details. If you do not wish to be interviewed, you can simply answer no and we will not ask for any contact details.

Where and for how long will this study go on? This study will be conducted Australia-wide. We will use social media networks to spread the word about the survey. The first survey will be open for three weeks. We will send another survey in 2 to 4 months' time through social media networks and to those who have provided us with permission to contact them again. This will also be voluntary. You can choose to do the 2nd survey or not to do it. The final survey will be sent after the pandemic is declared over.

Will I experience any risk? This survey includes questions related to your knowledge and practices related to COVID-19, which some people may find distressing or uncomfortable.

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 Australians' current beliefs and practices related to COVID-19. We expect the findings from this study to be used to develop better targeted public health messages about COVID-19 and other future infectious disease epidemics.

Confidentiality:

The specific information you share with us will be treated confidentially 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 Australians, or groups (for example specific age groups or genders) think or do in response to COVID-19. For example, most men thought one way about COVID-19 or most people aged 30-50 did not agree with the governments decisions around COVID-19. In this way, no-one will know who said what. But instead we provide a summary of what the majority of people understand about COVID-19.

For those of you who do provide your contact details for future follow-up or interview we will separate this information from your survey responses and keep this in a password protected file on the computer. We will only use this information to contact you at a later date for the specified purpose and will not connect it in any way to your survey responses.

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/ppi/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 will be stored for the mandatory data storage period of five years from the date of any publication arising from this research, after which the database will be archived.

How do I ask questions and report concerns?

Please feel free to contact the team leader, Dr Tambri Housen 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 (2020/178). 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