

Plain Language Statement: The Burnet Institute

Project:
***SCOOP: Strengthening COVID-19 communication
in Pregnancy***



Interviews with Pregnant and Postnatal People

Lead Researcher: Dr Alyce Wilson

Tel: [\(03\) 9282 2111](tel:0392822111) Email: alyce.wilson@burnet.edu.au

Contact Researcher: Ms Cassandra Caddy

Tel: [\(03\) 9282 2111](tel:0392822111) Email: cassandra.caddy@burnet.edu.au

Additional Researchers: Dr Megan Lim, Associate Professor Joshua Vogel, Professor Robert Power, Dr Marc Cheong, Dr Benjamin Coghlan, Professor Caroline Homer.

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following pages will provide you with further information to help you decide if you would like to take part in this research. Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions about anything you don't understand or would like to know more about.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you decide to participate, you can change your mind at any time, and withdraw from the study up until data analysis has occurred.

What is this research about?

This study will consider what health messages and advice people have received during pregnancy and after birth about COVID-19. Health messages may include, but are not limited to, advice from health professionals like your doctor or midwife, government health messages, social media, family and friends. We are interested in hearing from those living in Australia who are currently pregnant or have been pregnant since March 2020. This includes people who have and haven't tested positive for COVID-19 during this time.

Maternity care delivery has changed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to accurate and reliable health information is important to help pregnant people stay informed and make decisions. This can include information about how to access antenatal appointments, birth options, feeding advice, COVID-19 vaccine information, and information about changes to visitor numbers.

The aim of this project is to better understand what information is being provided to pregnant people to support them through their pregnancy and after birth during the COVID-19 pandemic and to better understand the types of information they feel they need during this time.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a 30–60-minute telephone or online video interview via media platform zoom where you will be asked some basic demographic questions such as your age, parity, and where you are located in Australia. We will then ask you about your experiences of being pregnant and/or giving birth during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on what advice and health messages you received during your pregnancy, and how this information shaped your experiences and decisions. This study aims to recruit 20-25 participants. With your permission the interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed.

If you decide to participate the researcher will arrange a convenient time to do the interview. The interview can be conducted over the phone or online, whatever is easiest for you. During the interview, the researcher

will explain the project to you and the purpose of the interview. You can ask the researcher any questions about the study. The researcher will verbally ask you if you consent to participate. If you say yes, the researcher will conduct the interview with you. If you say no, the researcher will not contact you again.

What are the possible benefits?

Participation allows you to have a voice and to discuss your experiences with a trained researcher. By discussing these experiences and thinking about ways that health information could be improved, you will help inform future health messaging strategies for other people who are pregnant or may become pregnant as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Findings from this study will be written up for peer-reviewed publication and may be disseminated at conferences.

Participants will also be offered a \$50 gift card for their time.

Participation will not affect your relationship with your health care provider and not impact your usual medical care.

What are the possible risks?

In the interview, we will be talking about your experiences during your pregnancy, and if you have given birth, we will ask you about your birth and after birth experiences. Some of the questions are personal and may make you feel uncomfortable, or if you have had a negative experience, talking about it may lead you to feel upset as you revisit these experiences. If there are any questions that you don't want to answer, or if you feel uncomfortable at any point, just let the interviewer know and they will move on to the next question. You may also cease the interview at any time.

If this interview raises any issues for you Beyond Blue provide a 24-hour hotline on 1300 22 4636, as do Lifeline 13 11 14. If you have been affected by sexual or domestic abuse please seek further support from the 24-hour hotline 1800 RESPECT. If you require assistance for anxiety or depression during or after pregnancy, PANDA provide a helpline on 1300 726 306, you can also access the National COVID-19 counselling service on 1300 22 46 36. If you would like further information regarding breastfeeding please contact the Australian Breastfeeding Association helpline (ABA) on 1800 686 268. For any other medical or pregnancy concerns please get in touch with your local doctor.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. You can skip any interview questions you don't want to answer and are able to withdraw from the study up until data analysis, to do this, please notify the contact researcher Cassandra Caddy (cassandra.caddy@burnet.edu.au). If you do decide to withdraw from the study any associated recordings and data will be deleted immediately.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

A summary of the findings from this study can be made available for you when it is finished. Please let the interviewer know if you would like to be informed of the results and they can email you a summary. The findings from these interviews will be submitted to an academic journal for publication, may be presented at conferences and will be developed into a policy brief for key stakeholders who provide communication about COVID-19 to pregnant people.

What will happen to information about me?

Any personal information obtained during this project will remain confidential and anonymous. We will protect your information and keep it private, subject to any legal requirements. A code or pseudonym will be used instead of your name in recordings, transcripts and notes. Recordings will be provided to an external transcription service for a maximum period of two weeks and after transcription they will be deleted immediately. Transcription services will only be provided an audio recording and a code, they will not be provided any personal details about you. Transcriptions will then be checked by the research assistant and any identifiable information within transcriptions will be removed, this will occur within an additional 2 weeks.

Recordings will then be immediately deleted from the Burnet Institute server. All information that comes from this project will be presented in such a way that cannot identify you as an individual. Your contact details will be kept separate from transcriptions and will be kept in password-protected files and kept on a password-protected computer, accessible only to the named researchers.

The Burnet Institute requires us to keep this data for 7 years after publication before destroying it.

Who is funding this project?

This project is being internally funded by the Burnet Institute.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact Dr Alyce Wilson [alyce.wilson@burnet.edu.au] or Cassandra Caddy on [cassandra.caddy@burnet.edu.au].

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact: **HREC Office/Complaints contact person.**

Position: Complaints Officer, Office of Ethics & Research Governance, Alfred Health

Telephone: (03) 9076 3619 Email: research@alfred.org.au

Please quote the following project number: 172/21

All complaints will be treated confidentially.

For further information regarding pregnancy and COVID-19 please see below:

Australian Government Department of Health:

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/pregnancy-birth-and-baby>

Australian Government COVID-19 vaccination decision guide for pregnant and breastfeeding women:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-covid-19-vaccination-decision-guide-for-women-who-are-pregnant-breastfeeding-or-planning-pregnancy>

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists:

<https://ranzocg.edu.au/statements-guidelines/covid-19-statement>

PANDA response to coronavirus:

<https://www.panda.org.au/info-support/panda-response-to-coronavirus>

Australian College of Midwives:

<https://www.midwives.org.au/covid-19-advice-pregnant-women>