

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

(Victorian Health Care Providers)

**Project ID: 27458**

**Project title: Understanding and planning for climate change effects by rural health care professionals**

**Chief Investigator's name** Dr. David Reser  
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You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

### What does the research involve?

The primary aim of this project will be to assess the level of current understanding and planning among health care workers for future climate-related impacts on delivery of care, and the areas of need for development of future training programs to be incorporated into medical and allied health curricula.

Participants in this study will be asked to complete a short (approximately 6 minutes) online survey on a secure website. Survey questions will include biographical and demographic information (Years in practice, age, gender identity, educational background, etc.) as well as sections regarding your awareness of potential health issues associated with anthropogenic (human influenced) climate change. Additional sections will explore your opinions regarding the need, if any, for incorporation of climate change-related instruction into health care provider training programs, your opinions about the need, if any, for ongoing professional development training in climate change-related health issues, and the extent to which you have planned for or adjusted your practice in relation to current or anticipated climate-related changes in health care delivery.

Participants may also be asked to participate in a face to face or videoconference interview, which is intended to gain more insight into your personal view, opinions, training, and planning related to the impact of climate change on health care, especially in rural or regional settings. These interviews will be scheduled with the convenience of the practitioners in mind, and with the understanding that there are heavy time demands on health care workers. It is expected that the face to face interview will last 20-30 minutes. In the event that a face to face interview cannot be arranged, your participation in the online survey component of this work would still be most helpful.

The face to face or videoconference interviews will be recorded for transcription purposes either by audio (face to face sessions) or video (teleconference sessions). While specific quotes may be used as part of the data analysis for this study, the recordings will be kept confidential, and will be viewed only by study investigators or paid transcription services. Video or audio recordings will not be released or published as part of this study.

## **Why were you chosen for this research?**

You were approached to participate in this study because you are a registered healthcare provider in the State of Victoria. Your contact details were obtained from a public website for healthcare providers.

## **Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research**

All participation in this research is voluntary, and you may choose to stop participating at any time. In the electronic survey, you will be asked to indicate your consent prior to the start of questioning. Consent will be reviewed again in the face to face (or videoconference) meeting. If you choose to stop participation before the completion of data collection, you may indicate that: A) data already collected may continue to be used (without identifying information); or B) that you wish to have all data you provided withheld from analysis.

## **Possible benefits and risks to participants**

This study is not expected to cause any mental or physical discomfort to participants. The outcome of the study will improve training of rural healthcare providers, and improve our understanding of the unique conditions faced by rural practitioners. While there is no direct, individual benefit to study participants, your experience and insight will be helpful for planning and delivery of healthcare in the future.

While all precautions listed will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of study participants, there is a small risk that your participation in this study may become known publicly. As there is some controversy around the issue of anthropogenic global climate change, it is conceivable that you could be subject to criticism for the opinions expressed in your responses. Although this is rated as a very unlikely scenario, the risk is presented here to allow you to fully consider the nature of your participation in this study.

## **Payment**

There is no payment or financial incentive offered for participation in this study, and there are no anticipated expenses associated with participation.

## **Confidentiality**

The confidentiality of participants will be respected and safeguarded throughout this study, including after publication of study results. Analysed data will be released only in aggregated, anonymized form. Where specific quotes or items from the in-person interviews are included, the personal details of the participant will be withheld from the public. For analysis of the in-person interviews, a transcription service will be used for extraction of quotes and statements by participants. In this process, the transcriptionist will only receive an edited, coded audio file with the participant ID number, but no additional identifying information. The transcription service employed will be bound under an industry standard confidentiality agreement as part of the payment agreement.

## **Storage of data**

Original notes, including any identifying information from participants, will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the principal investigator's office at Monash University's Gippsland facility. Electronic records, media files, and transcripts will be stored in a confidential Electronic Notebook program (LabArchives) and maintained under password protection and access control in the Monash University computer system. Data generated from this research project will be retained at Monash University for a minimum of 5 years after publication, in accordance with the Monash University Research Data Management Policy and the Public Records Office Victoria Specification PROS 16/07 - 3.3.5.

The policy can be found at <https://www.monash.edu/records-archives/records-management/advice/managing-research-data/retention-and-disposal-of-research-data>

## **Results**

Results from this study will be published in academic journals, mass media articles, and policy recommendations/government submissions. All study data will be released only in aggregated, de-identified form.

## **Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC):

Executive Officer  
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)  
Room 111, Chancellery Building D,  
26 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus  
Research Office  
Monash University VIC 3800

Tel: +61 3 9905 2052      Email: [muhrec@monash.edu](mailto:muhrec@monash.edu)      Fax: +61 3 9905 3831

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Reser', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**David Reser, PhD**

**Monash Rural Health- Churchill**