



PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Participants (individuals who have accessed eyecare services)

Plain Language Statement

Date: 01/06/2023

Full Project Title: Mitigating risk in eyecare

Principal Researchers: Dr Alex Jaworski (Deakin University)
Dr Amanda Douglass (Deakin University)

Associate Researchers: Professor James Armitage (Deakin University)
Dr Kwang Cham (The University of Melbourne)
Luke Arundel (Optometry Australia)
Dr Ryan Wood-Bradley (Deakin University)
Assoc Prof Rod Neilsen (Deakin University)
Madeline Baker (Deakin University)

Ethics Reference Number: HEAG-H 13_2023

We are inviting you to participate in a research study investigating how we can mitigate potential risks to providing appropriate eyecare to improve patient outcomes. You are receiving this invitation because you are a member of a support organisation that provides patient support for eye health and we are seeking to incorporate the patient voice and perspective in our work so that we can better address patient outcomes.

Project aims

The project aims are to firstly identify the potential risks to providing and receiving appropriate eyecare from the patient's and the eyecare provider's perspectives, and secondly, to identify strategies to mitigate these. This information will be collated from focus group discussions and a survey. The information will be used to create electronic resources, specifically two e-learning modules, to help the professionals involved in eyecare to identify Plain Language Statement & Consent Form to Participants
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the risks and develop strategies to mitigate these risks. The research project is a collaboration between Deakin University, The University of Melbourne and Optometry Australia.

What participation involves

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. In order to capture the patient's voice, we are inviting you to participate in an audio-recorded face-to-face focus group discussion (up to 90 minutes) with 4-10 other participants. These discussions aim to capture your perspectives and experiences as a patient so that we can better understand what good eyecare means to the patient and to identify some of the challenges experienced by patients when engaging or trying to engage with eyecare. These focus groups will be held at one of three locations: Deakin Melbourne CBD, Deakin Burwood or Deakin Waurn Ponds (addresses on page 5). If you choose to participate, the researchers will allocate you to the focus group location that is nearest to you. The discussion will be audio recorded to ensure all viewpoints and contributions will be considered in our analyses. If you agree to participate in a focus group, you are also agreeing to maintain confidentiality of all discussions and the identity of all participants.

Prior to participation in the focus group discussion, we would like you to complete a short survey, which will take about 15 minutes to complete. The survey collects demographic information to help with data analysis, including your age, gender, the post code of your primary location, if you or someone you know well has an eye condition and when you last had your eye health examined. A link to the survey can be found at the end of this document. You can also request a paper copy of this survey and it can be sent to you via mail and returned using a provided postage paid envelope.

Consent

Participation or your decision not to participate will not affect your relationship/s with any of the support organizations, the researchers, Deakin University, The University of Melbourne and/or Optometry Australia. The organisation that you are a member of will not be made aware of who provides consent to participate in the research project and therefore participation or non-participation with this project will not affect your relationship with your organisation. Furthermore, participation, non-participation or withdrawal of participation will not affect your study/academic grades/graduation or career progression/employment if you are a student or staff member, respectively, of the involved organisations and universities. By selecting the button/option in the on-line survey to consent to participate in the focus group discussion and completing and submitting the survey on-line, you are providing consent for the researchers to contact you and to participate in this research project.

Withdrawal of consent

Participation can be withdrawn at any point prior to deidentification of focus group discussions and any associated notes, by completing the Withdrawal of Consent form that is included with this document and returning it to the Principal Researcher Dr Alex Jaworski (contact details on page 5). If you commence the survey and wish to withdraw, you can simply close the browser before the survey's submission. If you complete and submit the survey, you can still withdraw from the study by completing and returning the Withdrawal of Consent form. Two weeks after the focus group, withdrawal from the study will not be possible as all data will be deidentified.

Eligibility criteria:

To participate in this project, you need to be 18 years of age or older, speak and understand English easily for the focus group discussions, have previously engaged in eyecare services, live in Victoria and be able to attend one of the three focus groups discussion locations (Melbourne CBD, Burwood or Waurin Ponds, addresses on page 5). Participants attending the patient focus groups will receive a \$100 Coles Myer Voucher as a thank you for participating in the project and to provide some remuneration for your travel and time.

Potential benefits of this project

This study represents the first to our knowledge to engage with both patients and eyecare providers to identify risks to providing and receiving appropriate eyecare in the primary eyecare setting in Australia and strategies to mitigate these. Based on their own experiences, eyecare providers have been shown to be able to identify the most common incidents and those that could cause the most harm. Furthermore, the patient's voice is widely recognised as important in reviewing and developing health care and can help improve services, with patients and their carers often identifying risks concerns before others. Incorporating the experiences of both patients and eyecare providers in the design and creation of resources for professionals involved in providing eyecare is expected to help improve patient safety.

Potential risks of this project

Potential risks that may be identified for a research project include inconvenience and discomfort to participants. While it is not expected that participating in this research will cause you to feel discomfort, reflecting on your own experiences or those experiences of people you know during the focus group discussion may cause you to feel discomfort then or later. You can leave (for a break) or discontinue your participation in the focus group discussion at any point. If you experience any discomfort or are in need of further support, we encourage you to contact one of the following:

- Your GP
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 or <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
- Headspace: <https://headspace.org.au/>
- Head to Health: <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>
- Lifeline: 13 11 14 or <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>
- MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78 or <https://mensline.org.au/>
- Suicide Call back Service: 1300 659 467 or <https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/>

If you know, or know of, any of the researchers involved in this project, you should not feel pressured to take part. Participating, or not, in this research is entirely independent of any prior relationships and will not affect any pre-existing relationship with the researchers, Deakin University, The University of Melbourne or Optometry Australia.

Participant confidentiality

All survey responses and focus group contributions will remain confidential at all times and will only be accessible by the researchers. All participants are required to keep the focus group discussions and the identity of any participants confidential and not reveal any information that would enable the identification of any participants, other individuals or eyecare services. All data, including survey responses, focus group discussions and associated notes, will be deidentified and all identifying aspects will be replaced with a unique code within two to four weeks of the date being collected. Only the facilitator and a designated researcher who are involved in data collection will have access to identifiable data before it is deidentified.

Data management and storage

Any hard copies of participant information (including consent forms and survey responses returned by participants who have requested hard copies), will be stored in a locked filing cabinet belonging to one of the Principal Researchers until they are deidentified. The audio recording of all focus group discussions will be transferred to the secure and password protected Deakin research data server immediately after each focus group session and deleted from the recording device. The audio recording will be deleted/destroyed from the secure server as soon as it is transcribed and deidentified. A designated researcher will deidentify data within two to four weeks of data collection. The key for the participant codes will be destroyed within two to four weeks of the focus group discussion so that no data will be identifiable after this point in time. Therefore, withdrawal of consent and data in this study is only possible before this time. Data will be stored digitally on secure password-protected files on Deakin's research data server and will be deidentified for all data analysis, discussions, presentations and publications. Only deidentified data will be shared by the researchers to enable data analysis using Deakin University's approved and secure research data sharing system. Data and hard copies of consent forms will be stored for a minimum of

5 years after any publications arising from the data after which point it will be deleted/destroyed if it is no longer required in accordance with Deakin University protocol.

Project monitoring

The researchers will meet fortnightly to monitor the progress of the project. The Principal Researchers will also meet with the focus group facilitator following each focus group to ensure the focus groups are running as organized.

Project outcomes

The researchers intend to publish the findings of this research in peer reviewed journals and present the findings at conferences. In addition, the e-resources created to assist with identification of risks to providing and receiving appropriate eyecare and strategies to mitigate these risks, will be made available on the Optometry Australia website. The electronic resources will not contain any material that will enable identification of any participant. Deidentified data will stored securely at Deakin, for a period of at least five years after the final publication of the research outcomes. The intellectual property generated by this project will be retained by Deakin University. The research project has received funding from the Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust to help support this work.

If you would like to receive the overall findings of the research project, you can contact Dr Alex Jaworski via alexandra.jaworski@deakin.edu.au or +61 3 522 72038. Please retain a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Withdrawal of Consent Form for your own records.

Conflict of interest

One of the researchers is also employed by Optometry Australia; however this researcher will have no knowledge of any participant identity and will only have access to deidentified data that is not re-identifiable.

Contact details of Principal Researcher:

Dr Alex Jaworski

Deakin University, Locked Bag 20000, Geelong, VIC 3220

Phone: +61 3 522 72038

Email: alexandra.jaworski@deakin.edu.au

Focus group locations:

- Deakin Downtown (Melbourne)
Level 12, Tower 2, 727 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC 3008

- Deakin Burwood
Burwood Corporate Centre
Building BC, Level 2, 221 Burwood Highway
Burwood, VIC 3125

- Deakin Waurin Ponds
Reach Building DD, Level 2
Nicol Drive North via Entrance 2 off Pigdons Rd
Waurin Ponds, VIC 3216

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number HEAG-H 13_2023.

Project survey

The survey can be accessed [here](#) if you have internet access. You can contact the Principal Researcher Dr Alex Jaworski (contact details on page 5) if you would like a paper copy of this survey and it can be sent to you via mail and returned using a provided postage paid envelope.



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TO: Participants (individuals who have accessed eyecare services)

Withdrawal of Consent Form

(To be used for participants who wish to withdraw from the project)

Date: 01/06/2023
Full Project Title: Mitigating risk in eyecare
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I hereby wish to WITHDRAW my consent to participate in the above research project and understand that such withdrawal WILL NOT jeopardise my relationship with Deakin University, The University of Melbourne and Optometry Australia and will not affect my study/academic grades/graduation (if a student) or career progression/employment (if a staff member) with the involved organisations and universities.

Participant's Name (printed):

Participant's Signature:

Date:

Please post or email this form to:

Dr Alex Jaworski

Deakin University, Locked Bag 20000, Geelong, VIC 3220

Phone: +61 3 522 72038

Email: alexandra.jaworski@deakin.edu.au

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