

Plain Language Statement

[Nossal Institute for Global Health*, University of Melbourne]



Project: How are You Going?

Professor Barbara McPake (Responsible Researcher)

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following text will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can 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 want to know more about.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is this research about?

The main goal of the research project is to gather data to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic and health outcomes and the overall well-being of individuals and households worldwide. The research will explore how large these impacts are, how they vary across individuals in different countries, by their social and economic circumstances, and over time. The project is funded by the Nossal Institute and the School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to respond to questions about your health status and well-being, your economic situation and some background information. We expect this survey to take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time.

You may also participate on someone's else behalf, provided they agree to your responding to survey questions on their behalf and not feel coerced to do so. We strongly recommend that you read out this statement to individuals on whose behalf you will be responding and seek their consent to participate.

The study hopes to get information on how your circumstances change over time. If you provide us an email address, we may contact you to participate in future online surveys that are part of this study every 3 months until December 31, 2022. You can also choose to respond to this survey as many times as you wish without any contact from us. However, you are under no obligation to provide your email address, or to participate in this survey, now or in the future.

What are the possible benefits?

We cannot promise that you will directly benefit from your participation in this research project, nor will we pay or reimburse you for your participation. Your responses may, however, lead to more effective policy responses to address the challenges posed by COVID-19.

What are the possible risks?

The risks associated with this study include the potential loss of confidentiality (for example if you give us an identifiable email address and the website is hacked). To reduce the risk of identification of individuals, your responses to this survey (along with others) will be stored in a secure server located at the University of Melbourne in deidentified form (and will be delinked from any information – such as email addresses) that may be tracked back to you. Furthermore, results from the study will be reported in aggregate form, for population groups and countries, and not individually. The number of survey responses gathered for this project is expected to be very large, further limiting the risk of your specific responses being tracked to you by government or international agencies. However, please consider these before deciding to proceed.

It is also possible that you could experience feelings of sadness or distress due to answering questions about the social, health and economic impacts of COVID-19. In these circumstances, we recommend seeking out support services provided by community organizations or government services in your area. You may also be able to access these services by telephone.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time by writing to the responsible researcher Professor Barbara McPake (see below for contact details). We will, however, keep the data provided by you until your notification of withdrawal for an indefinite period. This is because the impacts of COVID-19 are likely to last for many years and the management of future events may be informed by experience during this epidemic. We will also retain your responses to comply with our legal and regulatory requirements. We may also share your anonymized responses (responses that cannot be tracked back to you) with others as permitted by law for purposes of research, or for reasons of public interest.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

Selected tabulated results and charts from this research study will be directly accessible to you from this website, following your response to the online survey. In addition, analyses based on the data from this study are expected to be published in scientific journals,

presented at professional conferences and as short policy articles and op-ed pieces. Access to these articles will also be available via links on this website.

What will happen to information about me?

We will keep the data provided by you for an indefinite period. This is because the impacts of COVID-19 are likely to last for many years and the management of future events may be informed by experience during this epidemic. We will also retain your responses to comply with our legal and regulatory requirements. We may also share your anonymized responses (responses that cannot be tracked back to you) with others as permitted by law for purposes of research, or for reasons of public interest.

To reduce the risk of identification of individuals, your responses to this survey will be stored in a secure server located at the University of Melbourne in deidentified form (delinked from any information that can be traced back to you, such as email addresses) and managed in-house by a team from the Nossal Institute.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the responsible researcher Professor Barbara McPake (Tel: +61 3 83449299 Email: ni-info@unimelb.edu.au).

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

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. 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 the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

**Nossal Institute for Global Health*: Located in the School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne, the Nossal Institute for Global Health (<https://mspgh.unimelb.edu.au/centres-institutes/nossal-institute-for-global-health/about-us/about-the-nossal-institute>) is named in honour of Sir Gustav Nossal and his commitment to translating medical research into health for all. The Institute was established in 2006 to advocate for the public health of vulnerable communities. The Institute's Mission is to strengthen the quality, affordability and inclusiveness of health systems through practical research, learning and development responses to contemporary health issues.