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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Sex and Prevention of Transmission Study (SPOTS)

Kia ora,

You are invited to participate in SPOTS: Sex and prevention of Transmission Study. Please read this information carefully, to help you decide if you'd like to take part.

Who are we?

We are a research team working with gay, bisexual, takatāpui and other men who have sex with men (MSM) to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The team is Associate Professor Peter Saxton, Dr Steve Ritchie, Dr Janine Paynter, Tony Sriamporn, Tony Fisher, Josh McCormack, Cameron Leakey (University of Auckland), Professor Patricia Priest and Dr Sue McAllister (University of Otago), Dr Jason Myers and Dr Jacek Kolodziej (NZ AIDS Foundation), Kevin Haunui and Ricky Te Akau (Te Whāriki Takapou), Mark Fisher (Body Positive) and Dr Sarah Morley (NZ Blood Service).

Peter Saxton is the Principal Investigator. You can contact him at p.saxton@auckland.ac.nz or 09 373 7599 extension 81434.

The study is funded by the Ministry of Health and the Health Research Council of NZ.

What is this survey about?

This is a survey about sex between men, blood donation and HIV prevention. We will use the information to investigate alternatives to the current blood donation policy that excludes many MSM. The information will also be used to improve HIV prevention and sexual health services.

Who can take the survey?

You can take part if you are aged 16 years or over, live in NZ, and:

- identify as a man (cis or trans) and have ever had sex with a man, or
- are a trans woman or non-binary person and have sex with MSM, or
- you identify as a gay, bisexual, queer or pansexual man but have never had sex with a man.

Please complete the survey only once this year.

How long will the survey take to complete?

The survey will take about 8-20 minutes to complete. You can stop the survey at any time. Once you have completed the survey, you will be invited to provide a blood specimen (obtained by a finger prick) to help us understand HIV, syphilis and hepatitis C in our community. You do not need to do

this if you don't want to. If you choose to provide a specimen, we will ask you to provide some more information and sign another consent form.

What questions will you be asked?

The survey is confidential and anonymous. We ask questions about yourself, your sex life, testing for HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), attitudes and your opinions about blood donation policy for gay and bisexual men.

Benefits of taking part in the study

By taking part, you are helping to improve blood donation policies in Aotearoa NZ and are helping to improve health and wellbeing for gay, bisexual and other MSM, by arming advocates, researchers and organisations with the information they need to make things better. You will get to access survey findings online through the study website. At the end of this survey you will also get a chance to provide a blood specimen. You will receive a \$10 gift voucher if you choose to do this. We will state the benefits and risks of providing a specimen when you get to that part.

Risks of taking part in the study

Some survey questions are of a personal nature, including questions about sexual behaviour, drug use and HIV and STI status. You can skip any question you wish or select "prefer not to state". There is a risk that if you leave the survey open without completing it, someone will see your responses. If taking part makes you concerned about your risk of HIV, STIs or drug use, we provide contact details of gay-friendly health services below.

What are your rights?

Taking part is completely voluntary. You can stop the survey at any time without any disadvantage to you. Choosing to participate or not will not affect your future access to services. The only information you have to give is your age, sexuality and country you live in to check you are eligible to participate. After that, you can skip any questions you wish, without needing to give any reason for doing so – just press the 'next' arrow. Every time you click the next arrow in the survey, your responses from the last page are saved. If you choose to exit, your answers will be saved automatically. This means your responses will still be recorded, even if you exit from the survey or do not complete it. The information you provide is confidential and anonymous. We do not collect anyone's names or any other information that might be able to identify you, unless you choose to provide a blood specimen. We will collect IP addresses, which are unique numbers based on the internet connection used for the survey. Your IP address does not identify you or your current address to us. We will only use IP addresses to double check for multiple responses from the same person. When we are finished collecting responses, we will delete all the IP addresses that are collected. We will not publish any information where someone could guess your identity. This means we will not share any results where the number of responses is so small (e.g., people from a small town) that someone might be able to guess who the person is.

How will your responses be secured and stored?

Your responses will be stored on password-encrypted, two-factor authentication accounts through the University of Auckland. Only the research team will have access to the data and only a small subset of the research team will access identifiable data. This survey is part of an ongoing study, so all survey data will be stored indefinitely, meaning that there is no fixed end date for when the survey data will be destroyed. We hope to keep using this research to make things better for gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, but when it is no longer being used for this purpose, we will destroy the data we have collected.

How can you get updates about the study?

We will upload results and reports on our study website as soon as they are ready. We will also publish scientific articles, report findings at conferences and share results through media. You can find a copy of this information sheet on the study website spots.org.nz.

Contact details

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the study, you can contact:
Associate Professor Peter Saxton (Principal Investigator)
09 373 7599 ext 81434
p.saxton@auckland.ac.nz

If you are concerned about your HIV or STI status you can see a list of services at:
<https://www.endinghiv.org.nz/protect-test/testing/get-a-test/>

If you want to talk to someone further you can call these free helplines 24/7:

- Outline NZ - 0800 688 5463
- Alcohol and Drug Helpline - 0800 787 797
- Lifeline - 0800 543 354

There are also community organisations you might find helpful:

- [New Zealand AIDS Foundation](http://www.nzaf.org.nz) offers HIV prevention programmes, HIV or STI testing, counselling and support services. (www.nzaf.org.nz)
- [Body Positive](http://www.bodypositive.org.nz) is a group founded by and run for people with HIV/AIDS. (www.bodypositive.org.nz)
- [Te Whāriki Takapou](http://www.tewhariki.org.nz) provide services that help strengthen Māori sexual and reproductive wellbeing. (www.tewhariki.org.nz)
- [Tiwhanawhana](http://www.tiwhanawhana.com) is a takatāpui community group based in Wellington that welcomes people of diverse sexualities and gender identity. (http://www.tiwhanawhana.com)
- [F'INE](http://finepasifika.org.nz) is a Pasifika organisation which provides Whānau Ora navigation support and services for Pasifika LGBTIQ individuals and their families in the Auckland region. (finepasifika.org.nz)
- [Village Collective](http://www.villagecollective.org.nz) provides sexual and reproductive health education for Pasifika youth. Their [Rainbow Fale](http://www.villagecollective.org.nz) provides support for Pasifika Rainbow young people through mentoring, diversity groups and events. (www.villagecollective.org.nz)
- [Rainbow Youth](http://www.ry.org.nz) is a national youth-led organisation dedicated to supporting queer, gender diverse and intersex young people. (www.ry.org.nz)

If you want to talk to someone who isn't involved in the study you can contact independent health and disability advocate on:

Phone: 0800 555 050

Fax: 0800 2 SUPPORT (0800 2787 7678)

Email: advocacy@advocacy.org.nz

Website: <https://www.advocacy.org.nz/>

We have been granted ethics approval by the health and disability ethics committee (HDEC) (2021 EXP 11450). If you have any ethical concerns about this research, you can contact HDEC on 0800 4 ETHICS or email them at hdec@moh.govt.nz.

We'd now like to get your consent to take the survey:

By giving consent, you agree that you understand your rights and what taking the survey involves (including the risks and benefits).

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice)

I give consent to take the survey

I do not give consent to take the survey