



## Participant Information Statement

### **Project:** Why (not) rural practice?

**Researcher:** My name is Anne Davis. I've had a career in practice management as a consultant, trainer and onsite manager and now am a PhD candidate with the School of Medicine and Psychology, College of Health and Medicine, at ANU.

My interest in rural general practitioner (GP) workforce began in the mid-1980s when my then husband, a GP Obstetrician and I commenced a practice in Lake Cargelligo, NSW. The decade there gave me the full experience of a rural spouse practice manager.

My aim is for this research about the characteristics of the job of a rural GP to inform practices, communities, workforce agencies and all levels of government in their policy development and support practices approaches to improve the distribution of GPs and the access of our rural communities to GP services.

### **General outline of the project:**

**Description and methodology:** This project is about the rural GP workforce. I'm interested GPs' perspectives and experiences of rural general practice and the job of a rural GP. I'll be conducting interviews to learn about the elements of the job, including agreements to work, the responsibilities of a rural GP and how the GP is/could be rewarded for their work.

**Work agreements** are the type of employment relationships the GP has with the business entity. For example, an employee receiving wages, becoming a practice business owner, or maintaining a contractor status by paying a fee for practice services. Agreements may also include hours worked, frequency of work and other specific employment conditions.

**Work responsibilities** refers to the activities for which the GP is responsible. Responsibilities fall into two separate, but potentially overlapping categories. The first category is the responsibilities in-practice, for example in practice consultations and procedures. The second category is the out of practice responsibilities, for example hospital in-patient responsibilities, or police doctor.

**Work rewards** describes the modes by which the GP receives payment for the work responsibilities.

**Participant eligibility:** I am inviting GPs, including GPs in Training, who may be thinking about, currently in or previously in rural practice to take part in one of approximately 40 interviews.

**Expressions of Interest** close: 30 June 2024. The interviews will be conducted between June and December 2024.

**Use of data and feedback:** The information from this project will form part of my PhD thesis and may be published. Each participant will be emailed a verbatim transcript of their interview. They may provide comment within 2 weeks. Each participant will be sent a plain language report of the results or an appropriate paper to the email address provided on their Expression of Interest form.

### **Participant involvement:**

**Voluntary participation and withdrawal:** Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may, without negative consequences, decline to take part or withdraw from the project without providing an explanation at any time during the data collection period. You may also refuse to answer a question. If you do decide to withdraw, any data from you will be destroyed and not used.

**What does participation in the research entail?** You will be asked to complete an interview with me. I will record the interview, which will then be transcribed for analysis. The interview will be for approximately 1 hour. The interview will include questions about your GP journey and your perspectives and experiences relating to the elements of the work of a rural GP, including agreements, responsibilities, and rewards.

The diversity of participant backgrounds will be likely to give rise to very different perspectives, experiences and understandings. I am mindful and respectful of these different lived experiences.

**Duration and location:** The project will take place from June to December 2024. Each participant will be required for one interview. Interviews may be over the phone, by ANU licensed Zoom or in person at your practice.

**Remuneration:** One \$165 prepaid credit card will be provided to compensate your time in taking part in the project. This amount was determined by the Medicare payment for four, 15-minute consultations (Level B).

**Risks:** There is a small risk that you will experience distress while reflecting on your experiences. If this is the case, please feel free to pause the interview, skip the question, or withdraw from the project by advising me. The following resources are available if you experience continued distress.

- your usual doctor
- The GP Support Program, RACGP, <https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/practice-management/gp-wellbeing/the-gp-support-program>
- DRS4DRS 1300 374 377, a free service available 24 hours a day, <https://www.drs4drs.com.au/>
- Lifeline Australia 13 11 14, free service available 24 hours a day
- Beyond Blue 1300 224 636, free service available 24 hours a day
- CRANApplus Bush support line 1800 805 391, free service available 24 hours a day for all health workers in rural communities. <https://crana.org.au/mental-health-wellbeing/overview>

There is a small risk that you may be re-identified in the data. This risk is minimised by the researcher reviewing the transcript of your interview and removing or replacing any mention of names for people or places.

**Benefits:** This research will improve understanding of the work of the rural GP, and I hope this understanding will increase GPs' awareness of the details of the role, assist general practices in their workforce planning, and enhance policy development in this area. Your perspectives and experiences will also add value to my PhD.

**Confidentiality:** I will keep your identity confidential as far as allowed by law. Access to the data you provide will be restricted to myself and my supervisors. Identifying details will be stored separately to the research data, and your data will be labelled with a unique descriptor. Only I will be able to match your name to your transcript or recording. There will be no individual attribution within published results, reports, papers or my thesis. There is a place on your consent form where you may choose to have a pseudonym (a fake name) or have no identification attached to your data.

### **Data storage:**

**Where:** Data from your interview will be kept in the ANU secure storage. Your consent form will be kept separate to the recordings or transcripts to ensure your personal details are not linked to the rest of your data.

**How long:** The de-identified transcription data will be archived securely in the ANU's Data Commons. As acquiring data imposes a burden on participants, it is ethical allow later use of the data. The data I have

collected from your interview, will in this de-identified format may be made available to future researchers. The results of the data analysis will be described in my thesis which will be stored in ANU's Open Research Repository.

**Privacy:** In collecting your personal information, ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at [https://policies.anu.edu.au/pp/document/ANUP\\_010007](https://policies.anu.edu.au/pp/document/ANUP_010007). The link contains Information about how a person can: Access or seek correction to their personal Information; or complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

**Questions and concerns:**

**Contact details for more Information:**

For more information, please contact me on the following contacts: [anne.davis@anu.edu.au](mailto:anne.davis@anu.edu.au), 0417 438423.

Or my supervisor, Professor Kirsty Douglas on [kirsty.a.douglas@anu.edu.au](mailto:kirsty.a.douglas@anu.edu.au).

**Ethics Committee Clearance:**

The ethical aspects of this research was approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol H/2023/1373) on 10 April 2024. If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University  
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427  
Email: [human.ethics.officer@anu.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics.officer@anu.edu.au)