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Participant Information Sheet – General

Project Title: An International Survey of Hand Therapists: Current treatment approaches and clinical considerations for treatment of non-operatively managed acute volar plate injuries to the proximal interphalangeal joint (PIPJ) in adults.

Project Summary:

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Sarah Walsh, PhD student, School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University, Dr. Beth Mayland (Western Sydney University), Prof. Karen Liu (Hong Kong Polytechnic University), and Dr. Paul Fahey (Western Sydney University).

The research is a survey of international Hand Therapists that aims to identify preferred initial treatment approaches for managing acute non-operatively managed acute volar plate injuries to the PIPJ in adults and to identify factors that impact clinical decision making of Hand Therapists when treating a non-operatively managed acute volar plate injuries to the PIPJ.

How is the study being paid for?

The study is not being sponsored, and no money is being paid to the researchers.

What will I be asked to do?

Those who agree to participate will be invited to complete an online survey. The aim of the survey is:

1. To identify the preferred initial treatment approaches of Hand Therapists for managing an acute non-operatively managed volar plate injury to the PIPJ in adults.
2. To identify the factors that impact on clinical decision making of Hand Therapists when treating a non-operatively managed acute volar plate injuries to the PIPJ in adults

The survey will be divided into 3 sections:

1. Demographics
2. Preferred treatment approaches to managing a non-operatively managed acute volar plate injury to the PIPJ in adults
3. Clinical reasoning:
    a. Injury factors
    b. Patient Factors
    c. Clinician Factors

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How much of my time will I need to give?

The survey takes 12-15 minutes to complete.

What benefits will I, and/or the broader community, receive for participating?

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. However, the survey will help to shed light on how Hand Therapists manage acute volar plate injuries to the PIPJ, and what factors most impact on their decision making. This may help serve as a bridge between real-world clinical practice and research insights, providing actionable data to refine care strategies, address variability and ultimately improve outcomes for patients with volar plate injuries to the PIPJ

Will the study involve any risk or discomfort for me? If so, what will be done to rectify it?

Participation in the survey is voluntary and does not involve any significant risks to you. There is a small chance that answering the questions on the survey may make you uncomfortable. You are able to withdraw or cease participation at any time during the survey.

How do you intend to publish or disseminate the results?

This study forms part of a PhD degree and it is anticipated that the results of this survey will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. No identifying information will be collected as part of the survey.

Will the data and information that I have provided be disposed of?

Only the named researchers will have access to the raw data you provide, and it will be stored securely on Qualtrics which has Transport Layer Security (TLS) encryption and surveys will be password protected. The data will be stored for a period of 5 years and will be deleted at this time.

The data collected for this project may be used in other related projects for as part of the primary investigator's PhD degree or made available to other researchers who are completing projects on similar topics, or which are extensions of this project.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and you are not obliged to be involved. All answers and data will be non-identifiable and therefore it would not be possible to withdraw from the survey or edit your responses after completing the survey.

Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you can tell other Hand Therapists about the study by forwarding the email with the information sheet and link to the survey. You may also direct interested parties to contact Sarah Walsh at 15673392@student.westernsydney.edu.au to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain a copy of the information sheet.

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What if I require further information?

Please contact Sarah Walsh should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether to participate.

Sarah Walsh (Western Sydney University) – 15673392@student.westernsydney.edu.au

Dr. Beth Mayland (Western Sydney University) – B.Mayland@westernsydeny.edu.au

Prof. Karen Liu (Hong Kong Polytechnic University) - karen.liu@polyu.edu.hk

Dr. Faul Fahey (Western Sydney University) – P.fahey@westernsydeny.edu.au

Privacy Notice

Western Sydney University staff and students conduct research that may require the collection of personal and/or health information from research participants.

The University's Privacy Policy and Privacy Management Plan set out how the University collects, holds, uses, and discloses personal or health information. Further details about the use and disclosure of this information can be found on the Privacy at Western Sydney webpage.

What if I have a complaint?

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may email the Ethics Committee through Research Services: humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form. The information sheet is for you to keep, and the consent form is retained by the researcher/s.

This study has been approved by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H16515

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Explanation of Consent

What will happen to my information if I agree to it being used in other projects?

Thank you for considering being a participant in a university research project. The researchers are asking that you agree to supply your information (data) for use in this project and to also agree to allow the data to potentially be used in future research projects.

This request is in line with current University and government policy that encourages the re-use of data once it has been collected. Collecting information for research can be an inconvenience or burden for participants and has significant costs associated with it. Sharing your data with other researchers gives potential for others to reflect on the data and its findings, to re-use it with new insight, and increase understanding in this research area.

You have been asked to agree to Extended consent.

What does this mean?

When you agree to extended consent, it means that you agree that your data, as part of a larger dataset (the information collected for this project) can be re-used in projects that are

- an extension of this project
- closely related to this project
- in the same general area of this research.

The researchers will use this data as part of the PhD currently being completed.

To enable this re-use, your data will be held at the University in its data repository and managed under a Data Management Plan. The stored data available for re-use will not have information in it that makes you identifiable. The re-use of the data will only be allowed after an ethics committee has agreed that the new use of the data meets the requirements of ethics review.

The researchers want to keep the data for 5 years for re-use. After this time, the data will be securely destroyed.

You are welcome to discuss these issues further with the researchers before deciding if you agree. You can also find more information about the re-use of data in research in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research – see Sections 2.2.14 - 2.2.18.

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018

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