

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title	Supporting the wellbeing of Veterans and First Responders: University of South Australia's Invictus Pathways Program		
Short title	Ongoing evaluation of the Invictus Pathways Program		
Protocol number	Evaluation Research: 206032 (UniSA HREC) / 577-24 (DDVA HREC)		
Project Sponsor	<i>University of South Australia</i>		
Principal Investigators	<i>Dr Danielle Post</i>	danielle.post@unisa.edu.au	(08) 830 21831
	<i>Professor Gaynor Parfitt</i>	gaynor.parfitt@unisa.edu.au	(08) 830 21212

This Participant Information Sheet outlines the evaluation to be conducted regarding the impact of participation in the IPP on physical and mental wellbeing. Knowing what is involved in this ongoing evaluation will help you decide if you wish to provide consent for your data to be included in research publications. Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. We encourage you to discuss this with a member of your support network, such as a spouse, sibling, parent, friend etc., if you feel this would be beneficial.

What does participation in the evaluation of the IPP involve?

In addition to the student-delivered individual exercise training, and as part of involvement in the IPP, participants complete a selection of physical testing protocols and standardised surveys. The surveys contain objective measurements of physical and psychological wellbeing to assess your physical health, health behaviours, mental health, resilience, adjustment, and degree of reintegration and readiness for transition from the IPP.

These assessments include:

Physical Testing: Physical testing in the exercise program includes a standardised sub-maximal Perceptually Regulated Exercise Test (PRET) to predict aerobic capacity. The PRET involves self-selecting sub-maximal exercise intensities inline with provided numerical and verbally anchored ratings of perceived exertion. Comorbidity testing includes blood pressure, resting heart rate, fasted cholesterol, and blood lipids.

Physical and Psychological Wellbeing Questionnaires: The questionnaires completed as part of IPP are detailed below:

- Kessler-10 (K10), which measures your level of psychological distress
- Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), which assesses your ability to recover from stress (family care-partners only)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-5), which assesses for levels of post-traumatic stress (ex-or-current serving Defence members and first responders only)
- World Health Organisation Quality of Life BREF (WHOQOL_BREF), which assesses physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment

- Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF), which assesses your emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing
- International Physical Activity Questionnaire (short form, IPAQ-SF), which assesses your habitual physical activity
- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), which assesses your alcohol drinking behaviour (ex-or-current serving Defence members and first responders only)
- M-CARM, which assesses your psychological adjustment and community reintegration during transition to civilian life (ex-or-current serving Defence members only)
- Major Depression Inventory (MDI), to monitor the severity and frequency of depressive symptoms
- Recovery Assessment Scale – Domains and Stages (RAS-DS) to assess mental health recovery.
- Social and demographic questions that will relate to information about age, gender identity, employment status, living situation, and chronic disease status.

Program evaluation: Every 12 months, participants will complete a program evaluation survey. This survey will ask questions relating to what services you used within the program (i.e. physiotherapy, exercise physiology, goal setting sessions etc) and how satisfied you were with the delivery of these services. This survey will enable ongoing refinement of the IPP and modification of organisational processes to ensure that the needs of the participants and their families are being met.

Event evaluation survey: Following participation in an IPP associated activity you will be asked to complete an evaluation survey of the event. The survey will ask questions regarding reasons for participation in the activity, whether you enjoyed the activity, any suggestions for improvements to the activity, sustainability or additional information to share about your experiences with the activity. Event evaluation is a standard process within the IPP to ensure ongoing understanding of the experiences of participants from these activities, and the impact upon physical and mental wellbeing, to help optimise the program going forward.

Further to the assessment details outlined, participants in the IPP may be invited to participate in focus groups and/or semi-structured one-on-one interviews, which will also be used to evaluate the IPP and explore the experiences of participants, and contextualise survey responses to further understand the perspectives and experiences of IPP participants and family members.

Consent to publish data collected through participation in the IPP

As detailed in the IPP information sheet, participation in the IPP involves the collection of data (physical testing protocols and standardised surveys) to enable IPP staff to assess the impact of participation in the IPP and enable ongoing refinement of the IPP to ensure that the service continues to meet participant needs.

As part of continued program development, the IPP research and evaluation team also seeks your consent to analyse and publish these data in research publications in order to support multiple outcomes:

- The ongoing refinement of the program to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the target population;
- Evidence to support the potential for this type of program as a service delivery approach in an educational environment;

- Contribution to what is currently a sparse evidence base, in the Australian context, of effective approaches to supporting the ongoing physical and psychological wellbeing of, veterans, first responders, and where applicable, their families; and,
- Contribution to what is currently a sparse evidence base, in the Australian context, of effective approaches to facilitating reintegration and community engagement of veterans with the support of their families.

As a participant in the IPP, you will be eligible to participate in this evaluation. Participation in this evaluation requires consent for deidentified data collected as part of the previously listed standardised measures undertaken throughout participation in the IPP to be published in descriptions of the impact of the IPP, and the processes associated with its delivery.

Consent for the use of data to be used in evaluation is entirely voluntary; there is no obligation for you to provide consent for release of deidentified data to the evaluation team and the publication of data collected as part of your participation in the IPP. If you choose not to provide consent to release your deidentified data to the evaluation team and publication of your deidentified data, there will be no detriment to your career or future health care, or to your involvement in the IPP's student-led exercise training (veterans and first responders).

If you have any questions about the evaluation, or your role in it, prior to making a decision about providing consent to release your deidentified data for publication, please do not hesitate to contact Dannielle.

Dr Dannielle Post: Dannielle.Post@unisa.edu.au

Current serving Defence members are deemed to be 'on duty' whilst participating in the project.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you from consenting to the publication of your deidentified data, collected within the IPP, or participating in the evaluation of the IPP; however, your contribution may help to broaden the dissemination of information regarding the physical and psychological wellbeing outcomes for participants within such programs. It will also enable the dissemination of information about effective program management and refinement in accordance with identified participant need. This will have the potential to positively impact veterans and first responders through informing other programs targeted at improving the physical and psychological wellbeing of this population, and enhancing existing services that provide support to veterans, first responders and their families.

Withdrawal from the project

You may withdraw from the evaluation of the IPP at any time with no detriment to your career or future health care, and without affecting your relationship with the researchers or the University of South Australia, either now or in the future. If you withdraw from the evaluation of the IPP, your data will be included in the study, unless you specifically request that data are not included.

You may also request to withdraw consent for your data to be included in research publications at any point prior to analysis.

Withdrawal requests from the evaluation project can be made via email, telephone or in person:

IPP: invictus@unisa.edu.au

Privacy and confidentiality

Your personal data will be coded and the evaluation project team members will receive only deidentified data from the IPP.

You will not be identified in any publications, reports, or presentations. No information which could lead to the identification of any individual will be released, unless consent is obtained or if this is required by law.

All data will be stored in a databank on a password protected university network drive at UniSA via participant ID code that only members of the evaluation project team will have access to.

All data in paper form (for example, consent and survey forms) will be stored in a locked cabinet in a secure office which is locked after hours in the Centenary Building, City East Campus, University of South Australia.

Data will be retained for the minimum of 5 years following publication, based on UniSA's policy and in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Data will be stored in a databank and may be used in future, related research, for which additional ethics approval will be sought.

Other relevant human research ethics considerations

The ethical aspects of this project have been reviewed by the University of South Australia HREC and the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs Human Research Ethics Committee (DDVA HREC).

This project will be carried out according to the principles of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023)*. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

Dissemination of project findings

It is anticipated that the results of this evaluation will be presented to UniSA IPP coordinators, the UniSA IPP Executive Committee, and the UniSA IPP Steering Committee as a report; conference presentations and publications in relevant academic and professional journals will also be produced.

Outcomes of the evaluation will be provided to participants who request them. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

Questions, concerns or complaints

Should you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which the evaluation project is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers:

Dr Dannielle Post: T: 8302 1831, or Dannielle.Post@unisa.edu.au

Prof Gaynor Parfitt: T: 8302 1212 or Gaynor.Parfitt@unisa.edu.au

Or you may prefer to contact:

DDVA HREC, Telephone: (02) 6192 7821 or Email: ddva.hrec@defence.gov.au

University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee, Telephone: (08) 8302 3118 or Email: humanethics@unisa.edu.au.

Who is organising and funding the evaluation of the IPP?

This project has been funded by the *University of South Australia* and *Military and Emergency Services Health Australia (MESH)*, a charity of *The Hospital Research Foundation*.

This project is being conducted by *University of South Australia*.

No member of the project team will receive a personal financial benefit from your involvement in this project (other than their ordinary wages).