



## **PARTICIPANTS WANTED**

### **DO HEALTH PROFESSIONALS EXPERIENCE VOCAL FATIGUE WHEN TREATING CLIENTS VIA TELEPRACTICE COMPARED WITH FACE TO FACE CONSULTATIONS?**

#### **What is the study about?**

You are invited to take part in this research study evaluating if health professionals in the outpatient setting report vocal fatigue whilst using telepractice compared with face to face consultations. For the purposes of this study, vocal fatigue is defined as tiredness of and/or avoidance of voice use, and/or physical discomfort and, improvement of symptoms with rest. As telepractice - the delivery of healthcare via telecommunications technology - has seen exponential growth with the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a gap in the research regarding the potential fatiguing effect of telepractice on the voice.

If vocal fatigue during telepractice is established, findings from this study will inform further research into prevention of this potential occupational health and safety issue.

#### **Who is carrying out this research study?**

This research study is being carried out by the following investigators and ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the HREC of Epworth Health.

Epworth Project Reference: **EH2020-551**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Principal Investigator | Dr Amanda Richards MBBS FRACS<br>Otolaryngologist, Head and Neck Surgeon<br>Pinnacle Surgery |
| Co-Investigator        | Dr Kylie Smith<br>Voice Therapy<br>Speech Pathologist  |
| Co-Investigator        | Ms Georgia Magarey<br>Voice Therapy<br>Speech Pathologist                                    |
| Co-Investigator        | Ms Madlyn Connelly<br>Voice Therapy<br>Speech Pathologist                                    |
| Co-Investigator        | Ms Monika Harris<br>Speech Pathologist   |

### Who can take part in this study?

Health professionals delivering outpatient care for a minimum of 3 consecutive hours via face to face or telepractice. You must not have sought treatment for a voice disorder in the past 12 months and must not currently have an upper respiratory tract infection.

### What is involved if I participate?

Participants will be contacted via email (+/- phone) on the morning prior to and following provision of health care services for a minimum of 3 hours via one of the two modalities listed below:

- A) Face to face
- B) Telepractice (video conferencing and/or telephone)

Participants will be asked to complete the following:

- 1) Complete three questionnaires
- 2) Use the application 'Voice Analyst' on iPhones and 'Voice Recording' on Androids to make a voice recording prior to commencement of consulting and at the end of consulting (both within 15 minutes of such time). The voice recording will be completed in a quiet environment with the microphone 4 fingers width from the mouth that will then be emailed to [georgia@voicetherapy.com.au](mailto:georgia@voicetherapy.com.au).

The voice recording will include:

- Prolonged /ahhh/ sound x 2
- Reading the sentence "We were away a year ago"
- Reading the first 4 lines of *The Rainbow Passage* - "When the sunlight strikes raindrops in the air, they act like a prism and form a rainbow. The rainbow is a division of white light into many beautiful colors. These take the shape of a long round arch, with its path high above, and its two ends apparently beyond the horizon. There is, according to legend, a boiling pot of gold at one end."

Participants consulting via Telepractice will be asked to complete one additional questionnaire.

**How much of my time will it take to participate?**

Up to 20 minutes of your time.

**Do I have to take part in this research study? Can I withdraw?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate and then change your mind, you can withdraw at any time. You can do this by emailing Georgia Magarey [georgia@voicetherapy.com.au](mailto:georgia@voicetherapy.com.au). If you decide to withdraw after your data has been de-identified, we will not be able to remove your de-identified data.

**Are there any risks or costs to participating in this research study?**

No, there are no risks or costs with being in this study, nor will you be paid.

**What are the possible benefits to participating in this research study?**

We hope to identify if health professionals experience vocal fatigue when treating patients via telepractice compared with face to face. The findings have the potential to identify a health and safety risk for the health care community.

**What will happen to information about me?**

The information you provide will be de-identified and securely stored. Data will be kept for 5 years as per the Health Records Act and subsequently destroyed.

**Can I tell other people about this research study?**

Yes.

**What if I would like further information about the study?**

If you would like further information about the study please contact Georgia Magarey [georgia@voicetherapy.com.au](mailto:georgia@voicetherapy.com.au).

**Will I be told about the results of the research study?**

If you would like to be told about the results of the research study, please indicate when consenting to take part below.

**What if I have a complaint about the study?**

If you wish to make a complaint or have any concerns about this study, please contact Epworth HealthCare research development and governance officer by phone on 03 9936 8058 or email [research@epworth.org.au](mailto:research@epworth.org.au) quoting Epworth Project Reference: EH2020-551.

## Consent Form

Now that you have read the Participant Information Statement, please indicate whether you consent for your data to be used for the research described above.

**To be eligible, you must not have sought treatment for a voice disorder in the past 12 months and not currently have an upper respiratory tract infection.**

**Title**

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### **Declaration by Participant**

I have read the Participant Information Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand.

I understand the purposes, procedures and risks of the research described in the project.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the project without affecting my future care.

I wish to be informed of the results of this research

Name of Participant (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please email signed consent form to [georgia@voicetherapy.com.au](mailto:georgia@voicetherapy.com.au).

You will then be provided with further details and the questionnaires via the email address from which you send your consent form.