

ASSBI Newsletter

March 2022

Issue 78

Working together to improve the lives of people with brain impairment



WORDS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



As I put together these *Words from the President*, my aim is to write this column without focusing (too much) on the dreaded 'C' word. In doing so, I hope that you will indulge me as I share my (slightly meandering) thoughts with you.

I have been thinking a fair bit about communication in the digital age in recent times and its impact on our social interactions. A phenomenal change that has happened in less than 25 years. Indeed, penetration of digital technology is such that internet/mobile technology is now present in > 90% of households in developed and developing countries. With it comes a fast connection with the world and access to information like never before, through newsfeeds, social media, websites, search engines, resulting in a continuous flow of information and news cycle. Long gone is waiting for the 7 o'clock evening news bulletin for an update of the whole day of local and international news. Now, we can be become aware of an event almost in real time. One unintended consequence of this deep technology is news fatigue and a feeling of being overwhelmed, finding difficult to digest and make sense of this information, and have an informed opinion. Another aspect, which I will not discuss here, is although quantity and access have increased, quality has suffered. It is becoming increasing difficult to ascertain the accuracy of some news items that we come across. As Bruce 'the Boss' Springsteen already sang back in 1992: '57 channels (and nothin' on)!

The resulting paradox of this connected world is the tendency to tune out, and the risk of moving from headline to headline and, in doing so, losing sight of the content and its meaning. I'll give you one example to illustrate this point - and this is where I need to talk about COVID-19 for a minute. Currently, the good news is that, although still in their thousands, the numbers of individuals affected by the virus is slowly coming down. The tragic news, however, is that in NSW between 20 and 30 people are dying every day because of the virus! I'll repeat: in NSW between 20-30 people will lose their life to this virus daily. Because these numbers are repeated day after day, we read them and not uncommonly fail to appreciate their true meaning. Behind these numbers are 20-30 individual stories of sadness, grief and loss every day, of individuals, each with their own life, partners, children, parents, friends who have died prematurely. This is compounded by the fact that this information is no longer deemed worthy of front page news, but is now given a minimum space. For me, this exemplifies one of the negative aspects of constant information exchange, focusing on little things that grab one's attention, but at the same time diluting the impact of critical messages. As Marshall McLuhan stated in 1964 in his book *Understanding Media*, 'the medium is the message'. In other

words, how information is transmitted becomes more important than the message itself.

What has this got to do with ASSBI you may ask? Importantly, this behaviour illustrates the brain's limited capacity to process and filter large amounts of information successfully and the tendency to categorise information rapidly and coarsely ('black or white', 'Labor or Liberal') rather than using fine-grain categories. A capacity that can be further reduced following a brain injury. Another consequence is the impact of digital technology on mental and cognitive health, with a documented worsening in anxiety, stress, and fatigue associated with an increase in use of these tools. As clinicians working and interacting with individuals with vulnerable brains, we need to be aware of these effects on ourselves and others, and the need to take these into account in the management of our clients. As such, I highly recommend some regular 'digital detox' (for a lack of a better label): Turn off Twitter, close your computer, read a book, go for a walk or a coffee with a friend, and take the time to truly connect. Having done exactly that over the Christmas, I feel ready to tackle whatever 2022 will throw at me.

Please give it a try: Your brain will thank you for it!
Olivier Piguet, President

Executive Officer's Report



Please enjoy this newsletter and don't forget to get copy for the June Newsletter to me by 15th May 2022. 15th March 2022 is the closing date for applications to be a part of the ASSBI Committee as well as for Treasurer or Secretary. [Click here for a nomination form.](#) **Because the Conference is going virtual the AGM will now be held at 1pm on Thursday 26th May 2022 via Zoom.** Meeting ID is 853 5750 1546 and Password is 980189 Members will be able to download the Annual Report and Agenda by 14th May [HERE](#)
Cheers, Margaret Eagers, EO

SOCIAL MEDIA



Like us on [Facebook](#),
[Follow ASSBI](#) on Twitter
Become a contact on LinkedIn

If you have anything interesting you would like tweeted or mentioned on facebook, contact Lizzie or Travis via assbisocialmedia@gmail.com.
Lizzie Beadle and Travis Wearne – Social Media Officers

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR ASSBI Committee as well as Treasurer and Secretary

To nominate for any of these roles please [complete a nomination form](#) and email to ASSBI's Executive Officer prior to 15th March 2022

Please note:

- it is a requirement that the Secretary is based in Victoria
- you must be a financial member of ASSBI
- you must be seconded by a financial member of ASSBI

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Eagers (admin@assbi.com.au)

WEBSITE

It is now possible to order a pdf of most of the manuals/kits and workshops/webinars and receive the pdf by return email (if paid for at the time of ordering)

Signing in, as a member or associate, will give you the opportunity to update your own information **including your email address**. If you are an ASSBI member, it will also give you access to *Brain Impairment*. In addition, ASSBI members receive at least a 10% discount in the Store. if you want to change your email

[ASSBI AGM](#)
1pm Thursday 26th May

Via Zoom
ID: 853 5750 1546
Password: 980189

address login with your old email address or [email Matthew](mailto:email@assbi.com.au) to change it prior to you logging in. <https://www.assbi.com.au>

Be sure to add information about your discipline and your geographical base, as this will help us to better understand our ASSBI community.

When your membership is due you will receive a couple of reminder emails and you can renew and pay online by Visa, MasterCard or PayPal if you have an account. You can also transfer your fees via the bank – if you do this, email [Margaret](mailto:Margaret@assbi.com.au) so she can put your payment through. NO CHEQUES PLEASE.

If you have anything you wish to post on the site or have any feedback please email me at admin@assbi.com.au.
Matthew, Webmaster's sidekick

NEWS

Dr Nicci Grace has a new bundle of joy, a son, who arrived in February and is a bonified cutie. Congratulations from all your friends and colleagues at ASSBI

NEW PUBLISHED ARTICLE

Humanising brain injury rehabilitation: a qualitative study examining humanising approaches to engagement in the context of a storytelling advocacy programme

Kate D'Cruz, Jacinta Douglas, and Tanya Serry

Brain Impairment <https://doi.org/10.1017/BrImp.2021.16>

What the study is about

Narrative storytelling is gaining attention as an approach to support adjustment following brain injury. Building upon the findings of an earlier study that revealed the importance of the storyteller-facilitator relationship to the storytelling experience (D'Cruz et al. 2020), this study applied a humanising values framework to examine how facilitators engaged with storytellers. It was hoped that the findings of this study would provide insights into approaches to building and investing in strengths-based and humanising relationships in brain injury rehabilitation.

What we did

Using content analysis, transcripts from in-depth interviews conducted with six storytelling facilitators were coded to eight pre-determined dimensions of a humanising values framework: insiderness, agency, uniqueness, togetherness, sense-making, personal journey, sense of place, and embodiment (Galvin & Todres, 2013; Todres et al. 2009). The coded data was then mapped to codes, categories and themes generated from the earlier grounded theory study.

What we found

The facilitators met the storytellers as fellow humans. The mapping of their data to the dimensions of the framework revealed the depth of humanisation. The storytelling itself enabled entry into the insider experience and affirmed the individuality and value of each storyteller. Physically and emotionally safe spaces were created reflecting a commitment to the centrality of storytellers in the process. Facilitators adopted an active facilitation style, engaged in emotional work, and implemented a strengths-based approach. The findings of this study provide insights into how we can engage in humanising practice and illustrate the value of using a humanising values framework to guide advocacy and therapeutic endeavors.

D'Cruz, K., Douglas, J., & Serry, T. (2020). Sharing stories of lived experience: a qualitative analysis of the intersection of experiences between storytellers with acquired brain injury and storytelling facilitators *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 83(9), 576–584. doi: [10.1177/0308022619898085](https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619898085)

Galvin, K., & Todres, L. (2013). *Caring and well-being. a lifeworld approach*. London: Routledge.

Todres, L., Galvin, K., & Holloway, I. (2009). The humanization of healthcare: a value framework for qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 4, 68–77. doi: [10.1080/17482620802646204](https://doi.org/10.1080/17482620802646204)

BRAIN IMPAIRMENT



ASSBI's multidisciplinary Journal

To login to the Brain Impairment site of Cambridge University Press, **login** to the ASSBI website and [click on this link](#) to get directed to the Brain Impairment page of the CUP website, if you require any help with this please email [Margaret](mailto:Margaret@assbi.com.au).

Brain Impairment is pleased to have a new Special Issue available this month ([click on this](#)

[link](#)). The issue focusses on **Humanising Connections: Bringing people together in rehabilitation** and was developed by three special issue editors, Caroline Ellis-Hill (UK), Nicola Kayes (NZ) and Jacinta Douglas (AUS), who have curated a diverse and stimulating collection of articles. Through this special issue the editors ask us to consider the value of human connection within service provision, to explore new ways of researching which allows human connection to come to the fore, and to celebrate the experience and power of human connection in our therapeutic relationships. The issue brings together a breadth of perspectives including insights from the expertise of lived experiences, consideration of cultural influences along with representation of multiple disciplines (art therapy, health psychology, neuropsychology, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychiatry, psychology, public health, social work, speech pathology) and internationally (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom).

Our social media editors have been working with authors to share information about their articles in different ways. The [journal blog page](#) now has a new look and is a fantastic repository for sharing author-generated content and multimedia which we can also promote via our Twitter account [@BrainImpairment](#). You can also see a recent [Tweet](#) on our feed where we have amplified the voice of an author who shared a thread about their [editorial piece](#) on how to stop the isolation industry – it's a must read!

To read some of the articles from the author's perspective [click here](#)

*Jennifer Fleming and Grahame Simpson, Co-Editors
Nick, Liss and Louisa – Social Media Editors*

STUDENTS

Dear ASSBI & Student Community,
We would like to introduce our student team ambassadors for 2022!

National Student Coordinator - Aishani Desai

Aishani Desai is a PhD/Master of Psychology (Clinical Neuropsychology) candidate at Macquarie University in Sydney. She holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Psychology from the University of Warwick (UK) and a Master of Science in Developmental Neuroscience and Psychopathology from University College London (UK) and Yale University (USA). Aishani's current PhD research is focused on investigating the different cognitive and psychological factors that are associated with return to productive activity following a traumatic brain injury.

We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at our future ASSBI events!

The ASSBI Student Team

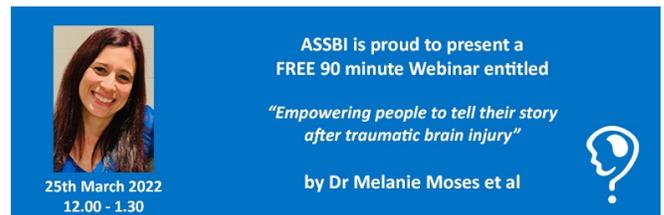
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are in the process of putting together the WEBINAR series for 2022 so if you would like to see someone give a webinar or a workshop or would like to give one yourself, please email [Margaret](#). If someone you suggest agrees to present for ASSBI you will receive a complementary registration.

ASSBI 2021 Series of Webinars

These are now available in the ASSBI Online Store

ASSBI 2022 Series of Webinars



ASSBI is proud to present a FREE 90 minute Webinar entitled
"Empowering people to tell their story after traumatic brain injury"
by Dr Melanie Moses et al

The first one in the series is a free webinar and you can register for it here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DzvqBWWcQ-smvirUvQnn9rg

Future Webinars are listed below, an invitation will go out shortly

Jonathan Payne & Silvia Velasco – 29th April – 2pm – 3pm EST
Kate Gould - 24th June – 2pm – 3pm EST
Michelle Kelly – 26th August EST
Campbell Le Heron – 30th September EST
Melissa Staples – 28th October EST
Mark Bellgrove – 25th November EST

ASSBI CONFERENCES

[Go to the ASSBI website to keep up to date](#)



STUDENT INFORMATION

ASSBI STUDENT AMBASSADORS

The student ambassador teams have been put together continued to organise more ASSBI student events throughout the year around Australia!

Adelaide Team Donella Coro Alexandra Epstein Kathryn Laity Graham Mylett	Newcastle Team Teghan Stettaford Elke Mitchell Alex Delbridge Zoe McTackett
Perth Team Danielle Flynn Adi Raber Emily Clements Sammy Moore	Sydney Team Grace Wei Mengije Huang Taya Farugia
Melbourne Team Michaela Grech Jao Yue Carminati	

If you have any questions, please contact Aishani Desai.

ASSBI's 45th Conference

#assbi2022



We are bringing you a VIRTUAL conference from Perth on Thursday 5th for workshops followed by the conference on 6th and 7th May 2022. The conference will be run on Western Australia time. [Check here for the time in Perth at the moment](#) so you can convert.

We have confirmed Dr Mathilde Chevignard, Prof Lynne Turner-Stokes, Prof Bronwyn Hemsley, Prof Beth Armstrong and Prof Juli Coffin, Dr Caroline Fisher and Edmund (Eddie) Tsang as keynote speakers.

[The programme is up and REGISTRATION is OPEN](#)

Online Conference Registration Closes: 6am on 5th May 2022

Conference Workshops: Thursday 5th May 2022

Conference: Friday 6th – Saturday 7th May 2022

If you are already on ASSBI or MERS Events' distribution lists you need do nothing as you will be notified as usual. If you are not and want to be then drop an email to admin@assbi.com.au



Professor Mathilde Chevignard - France

Mathilde will be giving a keynote address entitled **Long-term outcomes and transition to adulthood following childhood acquired brain injury**. This talk would be based on results of cohorts follow-up we have performed here, in childhood severe TBI (TGE cohort) and in medulloblastoma cohorts). [CLICK HERE](#) for her bio



Professor Lynne Turner Stokes - UK

Lyn will be giving a workshop and a keynote address entitled: **Tough Decisions around Catastrophic Brain Injury – An International Perspective**. [CLICK HERE](#) for her bio



Professor Bronwyn Hemsley – Australia

Bronwyn will be facilitating a half-day workshop entitled **Crafting A Robust Social Media Strategic Plan for Professional Practice: Development, Intervention, and Advocacy Online**. This workshop is an active-learning forum for delegates aiming to (a) move the

evidence base, gathered over the past decade, into their development and implementation of a practice-based social media strategic plan, and (b) increase the safety and enjoyment of health professionals using social media as a communication intervention with clients and as a means to advocate for their client groups.

Bronwyn will also be giving a Keynote Address entitled **People with Communication Disability Striving, Thriving, and**

Surviving as Technology Advances on the use of mainstream technologies, including smart home devices, virtual reality, social media, and 3D printing to improve the participation, inclusion, and safety of people with communication disability and dysphagia. [CLICK HERE](#) for her bio



Professor Beth Armstrong - Australia

Beth Armstrong will be co-presenting with Juli Coffin - giving a half-day workshop entitled: **What does culturally secure brain injury care look like for Aboriginal Australians?** and a keynote address entitled: **Improving services for Aboriginal Australians after brain injury: Current initiatives and findings to date**. [CLICK HERE](#) for her bio



Professor Juli Coffin - Australia

Juli Coffin will be co-presenting with Beth Armstrong - giving a half-day workshop and a keynote address. [CLICK HERE](#) for her bio



Professor Olivier Piguet - Australia

Olivier will be presenting the ASSBI Presidential Address

Sponsorship is open, if you wish to sponsor/partner with ASSBI [email Margaret](mailto:margaret@assbi.com.au)

PAST ASSBI Conferences

The abstracts for the 6th Pacific Rim Conference have been published in JINS. [Click here to see them](#), if you can access JINS. For those who had an abstract accepted at the conference the citation is as follows:

Final Program 2021 Virtual Event International Neuropsychological Society June 30 – July 3, 2021. (2021). Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society, 27(S2), 1-124. doi:10.1017/S1355617722000017

Past Workshops and Webinars are available for purchase #assbiworkshops

[CLICK HERE](#) to see more and order.

Jessica Trevena-Peters, Jennie Ponsford, Adam McKay, Dana Wong and Alinka Fisher have all presented full day training workshops. Neera Kapoor and Caroline van Heugten 90 min webinars and a multitude of 60 minute webinars have been presented and are available on the [ASSBI ONLINE STORE](#)

ASSBI RESOURCES

ASSBI Resources is going from strength to strength. We are pleased to announce that Elise Elbourn has joined the Resources team. Please contact Elise: elise.elbourn@sydney.edu.au or Skye McDonald: s.mcdonald@unsw.edu.au if you have any queries or suggestions about Resources.

MEMO

At ASSBI Resources we are pleased to announce that a new, on-line program has been developed based on our highly successful

"Making the Most of your Memory" Program. This unique on-line tool MEMO (Making Everyday Memory Optimal) <https://www.memorehab.net/> uses the same content as the original manual but is delivered on-line. Thus, participants need not worry about travelling to a clinician or centre for the training. Access anytime, anywhere. It contains additional newly designed self-paced memory exercises, videos and associated quizzes to reinforce learning. Clinicians can use MEMO in individualised and group-based sessions easily using their laptop or phone. So MEMO provides a cost- and time-saving solution for clinicians to run memory rehabilitation programs in a simple and supported way.

MEMO will be launched in coming weeks and ASSBI members will be given a significant discount. Watch this space for further news about this exciting product or contact the MEMO team via their website <https://www.memorehab.net/>.

Our fabulous ASSBI Resources products span assessment and remediation of a wide variety of neuropsychological, cognitive and emotional disorders commonly seen in people with brain disorders. Products include PDF and video downloads as well as paper versions of professionally produced manuals and kits that can be posted to anywhere in Australia.

To see the range to our Resources page.

<https://www.assbi.com.au/Resource>. You do NOT need to be a member of ASSBI to order anything from ASSBI you just get 10% off if you are! To get members price (10% discount) login to the ASSBI website first.

All resources in PDF form can be purchased instantly. Buy the PDF version and then you will receive the link to download a pdf of a manual or kit and webinar as soon as you pay. If you wish to purchase the UK version tick that option. You can pay online by PayPal OR using Debit/Credit cards Visa or MasterCard.

Non-members have access to some free downloads too – [click here](#) to see the full list of manuals and free to downloads on offer. There are also some FREE webinars which showcase some of our kits [CLICK HERE](#)

Skye McDonald and Elise Elbourn, ASSBI Resources

Opportunities for Involvement

There are a lot of colleagues out there wanting your help, have a look and see if you can help out

[CLICK HERE TO SEE ALL REQUESTS FOR HELP](#)

Having positive interactions with people with a brain injury: A self-guided online course

We have developed [a new online resource called interact-ABI-lity](#). This is a free self-guided short course about how to interact more successfully with people who have a brain injury. It is intended for family, friends, carers and others who work with people with ABI. On the interact-ABI-lity website, people can:

- **Hear from people** with a brain injury and their family members
- Learn about **communication changes**
- Learn how to **support people** with their communication
- Gain a **certificate of completion**

The course is currently being run as part of a research study funded by icare NSW, with approval from Western Sydney Local

NON-ASSBI EVENTS

This page is for Australian based non-ASSBI events as well as World Events

3 Cannabis Intervention Workshops

Interactive Virtual half-day Workshops
13th, 20th, 27th April 2022

An invitation email will come out soon



**Cannabis Intervention
Half-Day Interactive Virtual Workshops**

Presented by Etty Matalon

1pm - 5pm on Wednesdays
13th, 20th and 27th April 2022
Attend 1, 2 or all 3

Innovations in NeuroRehab

Virtual Two-day Workshop
24th & 25th March 2022

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)



5th AADPA Conference

Hybrid – Online and F2F

at the Sofitel Wentworth Sydney, 30th & 31st July

[SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT HERE](#)



**SOFITEL WENTWORTH
SYDNEY 30-31 JULY 2022**

5TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ADHD COMING OF AGE

19th NR-SIG-WFNR Conference

Hybrid – Online and F2F

in Maastricht, 12th and 13th October 2022

[SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT HERE](#)



Thursday 13
Friday 14 October
2022
in Maastricht
Netherlands



and lots more.....

ASSBI is happy to advertise your Workshop, Webinar, Conference on this page. If you want to advertise here [email ASSBI](#).

The only cost is that you advertise our events on your page EASY!

Events being held in Australia and around the world streamed or live by INS, BIA, NR-SIG-WFNR and other organisations can be found by clicking on this link:

<https://www.assbi.com.au/Upcoming-Events>

Health District Human Research Ethics Committee (reference number 2019/ETH13510). You can sign up at bit.ly/interact-ABI-lity and see more at <https://youtu.be/rifkwsVyh00>. See the attached flyer for more information. To find out more, contact Dr Rachael Rietdijk at rachael.rietdijk@sydney.edu.au.

Virtual reality applications for people with a cognitive-communication disorder

We are seeking research participants from the Sydney region to volunteer in a project to try **virtual reality** (VR) applications for people who have a cognitive-communication disorder following traumatic brain injury.

We are looking to include people with moderate-severe TBI, as well as speech pathologists who have experience in TBI rehabilitation.

Volunteering for this study will involve:

1. Completing communication assessments via Zoom (participants with TBI only)
2. Testing VR apps with the research team at The University of Sydney Camperdown campus
3. Giving feedback about the VR apps and tasks

This study has been approved by the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee [Project No. 2020/703]. We anticipate commencing data collection from late March 2022.

To find out more, please contact Sophie Brassel, PhD student at sophie.brassel@sydney.edu.au.

Self-Representation on Social Media by People with Neurological Conditions

We are looking for people who have an acquired neurological condition (e.g., traumatic brain injury, stroke, dementia) to share some of their social media posts with us and take part in an interview to talk about their social media profile/s and posts. Dr Melissa Brunner (University of Sydney) and Dr Catherine Talbot (Bournemouth University) are doing a research study to find out more about how people with a brain injury or dementia share their identity in social media.

If you are interested in participating, please click the following link to the survey (which contains the online information statement and consent

form) <https://redcap.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=47AME8LJWN>.

If you would like to discuss this study further, please contact Dr Melissa Brunner on melissa.brunner@sydney.edu.au.

Using social media safely and successfully after an ABI

The Acquired Brain Injury Communication Lab at the University of Sydney are working together with Brain Injury Australia on a project about using social media successfully and safely after a brain injury. We are looking for volunteers with brain injury to participate in this project. Volunteers may be located anywhere in Australia. Volunteering will include completing some interviews, completing an online course to develop social media skills, and participating in a private moderated Facebook group to practise social media skills over a 8 week program.

Interested participants can download a copy of the [information statement](#) as a first step. To find out more, contact Melissa Brunner at melissa.brunner@sydney.edu.au. This project is funded through the icare foundation. It has been approved by The University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (reference number 2021/019).

Dear Colleagues,
you are invited to participate in the research study: **Pocket MEC: Development of a screening version of the Montreal Protocol for the Evaluation of Communication**. (GU ref no: 2021/847)

Speech pathologists with *expertise* in working with people with Right Hemisphere Stroke or Traumatic Brain Injury who *have used the Montreal Protocol for the Evaluation of Communication (MEC)* are purposefully being recruited. The aim of the project is to gather recommendations on essential items from the MEC that should be retained in a screening tool, called the Pocket MEC.

Please find information about the research here:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Participant_Information. If you consent to participate, please access an online survey via the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZBM2Z2F>

If you have any questions about your participation in this research, contact Ronelle Hewetson at r.hewetson@griffith.edu.au

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study to examine the **current best practices for cognitive rehabilitation in post-COVID-19 patients with lingering subjective and/or objective cognitive deficits**.

If you conduct cognitive rehabilitation, we would love to have you participate in this project, which involves filling out a short survey (e.g., about 20 minutes) about you and your clinical practice conducting cognitive rehabilitation with post-COVID-19 patients. The survey can be completed in multiple sittings if that is more convenient for you.

Please click the link below to start the survey, or to gain more information about the research project. You are also welcome to contact myself (clare.ramsden@ths.tas.gov.au) or Rachael Ellison from Illinois Institute of Technology (rellison1@iit.edu) at any time to answer any questions.

We hope that you will choose to participate in this study to contribute to our global understanding of best practices for treatment of patients with lingering cognitive symptoms post-COVID. The information and responses to the survey will be kept confidential. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and individuals may choose to withdraw their participation at any time.

https://iit.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1Z1Bwyh3ZVDS8PY

Sincerely, Clare Ramsden, Tasmanian Health Service, Hospitals South