



[Reference Number: *D23/046*]
[13 March 2023]

Physiotherapists' perspectives of potential expanded roles for sport-related concussion

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, we thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request. This study will be undertaken towards the Bachelor in Physiotherapy (Honours) research of Mya Dalton.

What is the Aim of the Project?

Physiotherapists have critical roles for recognising (sports) people with concussion, immediate assessment and treatment, referral and rehabilitation. Currently, concussions need to be diagnosed by general practitioners (GPs), as well as cleared for return to activity and sports. Many people with concussion do not access GPs for various reasons. Based on our research with New Zealand Rugby, some physiotherapists have informally taken the role of identifying whether or not the patient/sports person has a concussion, and then facilitate a GP appointment for the patient. Physiotherapists often also appear to make the decisions for readiness for return to competitive and/or contact sports following concussion, either verified by a GP or not.

The purpose of this study is to explore physiotherapists':

- perspectives of potential formally expanded roles in the management of concussion and
- their recommendations for professional training to allow them to be formally involved in expanded roles, such as diagnosis of concussion and clearance for return to sport.

What Types of Participants are being sought?

We are seeking 15-20 New Zealand-registered physiotherapists regularly involved in management of patients with concussion (at least six in the past 12 months). We will use a sampling framework to include a range of age groups, ethnicities, gender, Physiotherapy Board of NZ registration status (General Scope versus Physiotherapy Specialist), post-graduate qualification, sports team involvement and geographic location. Volunteers will be excluded if the sampling frame has already identified sufficient participants with similar variables. There is no reimbursement for taking part in this study.

What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to:

1. Complete the online screening questionnaire to help us to decide whether you can be included in the study.
2. The researchers will contact you to answer any questions you may have and inform you whether you meet the inclusion criteria based on the screening questionnaire.
3. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria or if we already have included sufficient participants with similar variables as you, we will save your professional characteristics and the demographic data to describe volunteers that were not included. That data will be deidentified and your name and contact details will be deleted as soon as data collection is completed.
4. If you meet the criteria for inclusion, we will ask you to sign the attached consent form and send it to us via email. We will book an interview or focus group time for you with Mya (the student researcher) and a research team member at a mutually convenient time.
5. Attend an individual e-conference interview or a focus group of maximally 3-4 participants via Zoom. The interviews and discussions will be based on a semi-structured interview guide. This interview or focus group is expected to last maximally one hour and will be recorded.
6. The recording of the interview will be transcribed with an online platform (Otter.ai, a secure platform) and checked by Mya. Notes will be taken by Mya or the research team member during the interview or discussion. You will be offered a copy of the transcription.
7. After all the interviews/focus groups have been completed and analysed, you will be sent a summary of the study's findings to provide feedback, if you wish.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes your past and current roles for recognising, assessment and management of sports-related concussions, and processes of referrals to the GPs. We will explore your potential recommendations for future expanded roles, and what professional training you suggest physiotherapists would need to undertake to diagnose concussions, indications for referral, and clearance for return to sport/activity.

The precise nature of the questions has not been determined in advance but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the School of Physiotherapy is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. If the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

We do not expect any interview participants to suffer any physical or emotional harm from completing the interviews. If, however, you feel emotionally overwhelmed during the interview, you may decline to answer any question and withdraw from the study at any time without any disadvantage to yourself.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

To ensure we include participants representative of a wide variety of opinions, your following personal data will be gathered:

- Ethnicity, age group, gender.
- Years of experience as a physiotherapist and estimated number of people with concussion seen in your professional capacity in the past 12 months.
- Physiotherapy Board of NZ registration status (general scope; physiotherapy specialist)
- Post-graduate education
- Clinical setting e.g. private clinic, public hospital department, non-government organisation.
- Sports team involvement or individual sports people in clinics.
- Geographic location type e.g. large urban, small town, rural community.

The interview or focus group will be recorded to ensure accuracy when it is transcribed. The transcriptions will be analysed to determine common themes which will then form the findings of the study.

You will be offered a copy of your recording and of the transcribed notes after your interview. We will provide a draft summary of the final analysis of the interviews/focus group to you, and you will have the opportunity to provide feedback, and withdraw or modify any personal direct quotes if you wish to do so.

For purposes of administration there will be a separate spreadsheet with your name and contact details for the duration of the research study. This spreadsheet will also be stored on a password protected computer and will be deleted once the research study has been completed and submitted for publication. Only Mya Dalton and Prof Gisela Sole will have access to this spreadsheet. Other research team members will have access to, and view, your de-identified personal data (professional characteristics and demographic data), and the de-identified interview transcription.

The participant data, recordings and transcriptions will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **at least 10 years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants [contact details, audio recordings, after they have been transcribed etc.,] may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

No material that could personally identify you will be used in any reports on this study. Results of this research may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?

You may withdraw from the project, before its completion and without any disadvantage to yourself before the 30th June 2023. If you do wish to withdraw and your interview/focus group data has not yet been analysed, your interview recording, transcript and any data analysis will be immediately deleted and will not be included in the final findings of the study.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Mya Dalton, BPhy(Hons Student) School of Physiotherapy, Wellington	dalmy767@student.otago.ac.nz
Prof Gisela Sole (she/her) School of Physiotherapy, Dunedin	Gisela.sole@otago.ac.nz Tel: 03-4797466
Dr Olivia Galea, Lecturer School of Physiotherapy, Dunedin	Olivia.galea@otago.ac.nz
Dusty Quinn, Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Specialist Back in Motion, Dunedin	qodus279@otago.ac.nz
Peter Gallagher, Sports Physiotherapy Specialist NZ Rugby	peter.gallagher@nzrugby.co.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.



Sports physiotherapists' perspectives of potential expanded roles for concussion

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project before its completion (30th June 2023);
3. Personal identifying information [personal details, audio-recordings] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least ten years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes your clinical practice around concussion and perspectives of potential expanded roles. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind;
5. There is a risk I may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or I may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics raised during the interview or focus group. I understand that I do not have to share any personal information and I do not need to answer any question if I feel it is too personal or I feel uncomfortable;
6. There will be no reimbursement for taking part in this study;
7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

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(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed Name)