



***Physiotherapists' Perceptions and Experiences of Assessment of Pain Sensitivity in Musculoskeletal Practice Settings: A Qualitative Study.***

**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.

**What is the Aim of the Project?**

Heightened pain sensitivity explains pain and disability in a subgroup of people with musculoskeletal pain. Recognition of pain sensitivity through evidenced based assessments could help tailor the treatments for people presenting with heightened pain sensitivity.

The project aims to explore physiotherapists perceptions and experiences of pain sensitivity assessment in musculoskeletal clinical practice settings and explore the need and design of educational resources to improve their knowledge and skills in assessing pain sensitivity.

**What Types of Participants are being sought?**

NZ-registered Physiotherapists who routinely assess and treat people with musculoskeletal pain and currently hold an annual practising certificate are sought for this project.

Eligible physiotherapists are invited to participate in an interview to explore their perceptions and experiences in assessing pain sensitivity in clinical practice. The interview will take a maximum of 60 minutes, and it can be *in person* at the School of Physiotherapy or *via Zoom* as per your preference and at your preferred time.

Associate Professor Ram Mani leads the study, which is being conducted as part of the Stanley Paris Research fellowship project on translating pain-sensitivity knowledge, assessment tools and skills into clinical practice. The Stanley Paris Research Fund supports the study.

Toni Thomas, a physiotherapy honours student at the School of Physiotherapy, University of Otago, will use the data from this study for her thesis.

The principal investigator or a research fellow, or the student researcher will conduct the qualitative interviews. The PI or research fellow will be present during the student interviews.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide not to participate, you will not be disadvantaged, and we thank you for considering our request. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason.

When you have read this information sheet carefully, please feel free to ask if there is anything you do not understand.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

### **What will Participants be asked to do?**

If you agree to participate in this project, you will be asked to complete a brief online survey of your information, which will take less than a few minutes. At the beginning of the survey, you will have the opportunity to review the study information and provide consent to participate. The following information will be collected: age range, ethnicity, gender, average working hours, clinical setting, MSK patient's caseload, years of experience and qualifications, including pain, and any recent attendance at pain-specific workshops/conferences and contact details for further study related communication.

You will be contacted by email to schedule an interview at your preferred time (e.g. after work hours) and medium (in-person at the physiotherapy school or via Zoom) to discuss your perspectives and experiences in assessing pain sensitivity. The interview will take up to an hour.

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

After the interview, you will be offered a \$100 gift voucher as a thank you for participating in the research. The gift voucher will be sent to your email address.

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

This project involves an open-questioning technique. You will be able to talk freely. The general line of questioning includes your understanding of pain sensitivity, the ways you are currently assessing it in your practice, how it is influencing (or might influence) your patient outcomes, barriers and facilitators of assessing pain sensitivity in clinical practice, your preferences for learning to enhance skills and knowledge in assessing pain sensitivity. In addition to exploring the above areas, Māori physiotherapists will specifically explore how assessment of pain sensitivity practices is acceptable to a Māori worldview. Pacifica physiotherapists will be interviewed along similar lines of exploration.

The precise nature of the questions that will be asked has been determined in advance but will be modified depending on how the interview develops. 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). You can refuse to answer any question(s) if you wish.

The interview will be recorded with audio recorders or by the Zoom platform. The recording will be transcribed word for word by a commercial transcription service. After completion of the transcribed interview, the audio recording will be deleted at the end of the study. You can

comment on your interview transcription if you wish. You also have the right to request that any information you disagree with be corrected. We will analyse all participants' transcribed interview data to identify common messages (i.e., themes) arising out. Your feedback on the study findings will be sought if you wish to provide it. You have the right to request access to the survey information, audio recordings and the transcribed interview data the research team holds. If you have any questions about the collection and use of information about you, you should ask the researcher.

The study findings will be published in a peer-reviewed journal, including in the Open Access Journals and on the study webpage, and it may be widely disseminated via social media platforms and scientific meetings and seminars. The results of the project will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand). No material that could personally identify you will be used in any reports on this study. The data included in the publication will not be linked to any specific person, and your identity will not be recorded with the data. You are welcome to request a copy of the study results. These will be available once all the data is analysed.

Survey and transcribed interview data will be stored electronically in a password-secured University of Otago-owned computer. Only the named researchers will have access to the survey data, interview recordings and the transcribed data.

Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **five years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants, such as contact details and audio and/or video tapes, after they have been transcribed will 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.

### **Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from the project before the data is analysed and results are compiled without any disadvantage to yourself.

### **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 the principal investigator.

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<p><b>Name:</b> Toni Thomas <b>Position:</b> Bachelor of Physiotherapy (final year) Honours Student <b>Department:</b> School of Physiotherapy, University of Otago, Dunedin.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:thoto975@student.otago.ac.nz">thoto975@student.otago.ac.nz</a></p>
<p><b>Name:</b> (TBC) <b>Position:</b> ARF <b>Department:</b> School of Physiotherapy, University of Otago, Dunedin.</p>	<p><b>Email:</b> <a href="#">TBC</a></p>

<b>Name:</b> Dr Hemakumar Devan <b>Position:</b> Lecturer <b>Department:</b> Rehabilitation Teaching and Research Unit, University of Otago, Wellington.	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Hemakumar.devan@otago.ac.nz">Hemakumar.devan@otago.ac.nz</a>
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This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, 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 [humanethics@otago.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@otago.ac.nz)). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.



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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- data analysed, and results are derived.
3. Personal identifying information such as zoom *video/audio-tapes, contact details* will be destroyed after the project, but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes your understanding of pain sensitivity, the ways you are currently assessing it in your practice, how it is influencing (or might influence) your patient outcomes, barriers, and facilitators of assessing pain sensitivity in clinical practice, your preferences for learning to enhance skills and knowledge in assessing pain sensitivity. The precise nature of the questions will be modified depending on the way in which the interview develops and that if 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. After the interview, you will be offered a \$100 voucher as a thank you for participating in this research.
6. The project results may be published in the public domain (journals, dedicated web pages, conferences) and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand), but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.
7. I wish to receive a copy of my transcript Y/N  
I wish to receive a copy of the results/themes derived from the combined data Y/N  
I consent to Ram Mani being present at the interview Y/N

I agree to take part in this project.

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(Signature of participant)

.....  
(Date)

.....  
(Printed Name)