



**MEDICAL AND
HEALTH SCIENCES**



Flux NZ Participant Information Sheet

ABOUT THE STUDY

Issues like friendship and feeling connected, your sexual health, drug use, and mental health affect all of us in the gay community, and beyond. We want to explore what you, and your friends, think about these issues, and how they affect people's decisions – your decisions – over time. We will also investigate why some men enjoy taking certain drugs, why some men don't take drugs, and how those choices affect other parts of their lives, both good and bad.

To do this right, we need all sorts of gay and bisexual men to participate. If you have never taken drugs or take drugs all the time; if you feel connected to gay community life, or have nothing to do with it; if you have close gay friendship networks or have no gay friends. We need to hear from EVERYONE to make the Flux study a success, so we can ensure that community organisations and services can respond to everyone's needs.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

Once every six months, we'll send you a link to a questionnaire. This won't be just another, all-too-brief (and often pointless), 5-minute questionnaire. It will be thorough, and get right to the point. One of our goals is to NOT waste your time with questionnaires that achieve little. We need to ask about these issues in some detail to make sure this research can be useful and actually help our communities, so it may take 25-40 minutes of your time. [Click here](#) for more information. For a copy of the study protocol, [click here](#).

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible to participate in this study, you must:

- Be male, currently living in New Zealand;
- Be 16 years and 6 months of age or older;
- Have had sex with another man in the preceding 12 months OR identify as homosexual or bisexual or takatāpui; and
- Willing to consent to the study requirements (listed below)

We are interested in enrolling a broad cross section of gay and other men who have sex with men, and all men who meet the criteria above are of interest to us. We are interested in hearing from you whether you have taken drugs before or not, or you are part of the gay community or not.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

If you choose to participate, the study has a number of elements. The main (and essential) part of the study is a semi-annual online survey. Every 6 months, you will need to complete the survey, which will take up to 25-40 minutes. The questionnaire includes sections on general demographics, your sexuality, pleasure, sexual behaviour, attachment to the gay community, drug use, sexual health, mental health and knowledge and attitudes towards HIV.

Participants may also be selected for an additional face-to-face interview. This interview will be conducted confidentially, and no identifying details from the interview will be used in results or reporting of this study. This interview will be conducted by a trained interviewer, recorded for accuracy, and then transcribed for analysis. All recordings will be destroyed upon transcription. This interview should take 60 minutes on average, but it is NOT required for participation in the Flux study as a whole.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

Welcome to the Flux Study. A study that follows the lives of people as they change – in flux.

What's involved? Simply complete this survey twice a year. We want to hear what you've been up to.

The Flux study is an in-depth study about you and your experience. So, we need to ask you some detailed questions. This is not just a simple online poll. It will take about 30-40 minutes to complete so please allow enough time and make sure you're comfortable.

This survey is divided into the following sections:

- About you
- Sexual health
- Drug use (legal and other drugs)
- Impact of drugs
- Community and friends
- Sexual behaviours
- General health and well-being
- Access to services, and
- Your opinions.

ENQUIRIES

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

Principal investigator (NZ): Dr Peter Saxton (phone 09 373 7599 ext 81434; email: p.saxton@auckland.ac.nz)

Head of Department (NZ): Dr David Newcombe (phone 09 923 6557; email: d.newcombe@auckland.ac.nz)

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any identifying information will be kept confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or if required by law. If you give us your permission by signing this document and consenting to participate in Flux, we plan to discuss the statistical findings from this project with both relevant government and non-government organisations and publish the results in peer-review journals. Information will be published in an aggregate manner, so that you cannot be identified. The de-identified data will also be maintained in a confidential manner and kept for a period of seven years after the study ceases.

FEEDBACK

Feedback will be provided through the media, through public meetings and seminars (advertised in the gay press and other press), and through reports and publications prepared by the study team. Copies of reports and articles that involve data from this study will be available in a Publications and Reports Section on this website in the near future and on the publications page at the Gay Men's

Sexual Health research group, University of Auckland, The Kirby Institute and at ARCSHS (Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society).

YOUR CONSENT

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with the University of Auckland, New Zealand AIDS Foundation, New Zealand Drug Foundation, New Zealand Needle Exchange Programme or Body Positive. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

FUNDING

The Flux Study is funded by the Australian Research Council with support from the University of Auckland and the New Zealand AIDS Foundation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Flux is being conducted by the Kirby Institute for immunity and infection in society at UNSW, in partnership with Australian organisations and the University of Auckland, New Zealand AIDS Foundation, New Zealand Drug Foundation, New Zealand Needle Exchange Programme and Body Positive.

SUPPORT

The survey covers sensitive topics and the questions may not always be easy to answer. If you want to talk to someone further you can call these free helplines 24/7:

Outline NZ - **0800 688 5463**

Alcohol and Drug Helpline - **0800 787 797**

Lifeline - **0800 543 354**

COMPLAINTS

For any concerns regarding ethical issues you may contact the Chair, University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, at the University of Auckland Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373 7599 ext 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz. Any complaint you make will be investigated promptly and you will be informed of the outcome.

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 28th August 2018 for three years. Reference Number 020977.