

Queensland Health

ATHENA COVID-19 Study

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The **A**ustralians **T**ogether **HE**alth **IN**iti**A**tive

Sponsor: The Health Innovation, Investment and Research Organisation (HIIRO), Queensland Health.

Supported by: The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and all seven Queensland Primary Health Networks (PHN) and Queensland Health.

Overview and background

This research study aims **to describe the health outcomes of people diagnosed with COVID-19** in Queensland, over time and in relation to patient characteristics, by combining COVID-19 notification, hospital, general practice and death data.

General practice patient health information, in comparison to hospital data, contains additional, more detailed and up-to-date information on patient characteristics, including health conditions and medications at the time of infection.

We will be contacting people who have had COVID-19 and invite them to participate by giving their individual consent.

For those patients that have consented, our ATHENA COVID-19 Coordination Centre will then be contacting your practice to ask if you would export a copy of your patient's health information to Queensland Health in a simple but secure series of pre-defined steps.



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Background

The novel coronavirus disease, named COVID-19 on 11 February 2020, is caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus. While the number of confirmed cases worldwide and in Australia is reported daily, detailed data on the outcomes of people who test positive for SARS-CoV-2, and predictors of outcomes, are still scarce. Outcomes are likely to vary with context, including according to extensiveness of surveillance and testing, health systems functioning and population characteristics.

Evidence to date has come primarily from overseas countries who were ahead of us in the pandemic, **but not Australia.**

Knowledge gaps in relation to COVID-19

There is limited information to date describing patient characteristics associated with outcomes. We do know there is substantial variation by age, with younger people generally experiencing milder forms of disease, with a greater proportion of those with severe disease or death being older.

Importantly, these data to date have only been based on **hospitalised patients**, and do not include all patients who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and were managed in the community.

Furthermore, **they do not include Australian data.** Australian-specific and state-specific data are **essential** as outcomes are dependent on a number of region-specific factors including population profile, health system factors and the public health actions taken by individuals and Government.

Study Objectives

The main objectives of the ATHENA COVID-19 STUDY are:

1. To quantify hospital-based outcomes and deaths, including in relation to sociodemographic characteristics and comorbidities as ascertained from hospital AND general practice data.
2. To estimate the strength of association between these outcomes and sociodemographic and health characteristics.

Study Sponsor

The Health Innovation, Investment and Research Office ([HIIRO](#)) of Queensland Health is responsible for consultation, development and review of State-wide research ethics and research governance policies.

HIIRO provides a central portal of contact for Researchers, HHS Human Research Ethics Committee Chairs and Members, Coordinators, Research Governance Offices/rs and study sponsors seeking advice and direction on ethical and governance issues associated with the conduct of research in Queensland Health.

How can General Practices help with this?

- This is an information pack containing an outline of the study, letters of support from Queensland Health, Primary Health Networks Queensland, and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).
- Subsequent to this, a project member from our ATHENA COVID-19 Coordination Centre will contact your practice to explain the details of the study and answer any questions you may have.
- We will also let you know if you have a specific patient(s) who have tested positive for COVID-19, and that we will be contacting them to obtain consent for release of their GP data. Only those consented patients' records will be requested.
- If the patient consents, you will be sent a General Practice Data Release request from Queensland Health via a secure method asking to export a once-only copy of the patient health information to Queensland Health in a simple but secure series of pre-defined steps for the ATHENA COVID-19 Study. A simple instructional link will be made available.
- For further information please contact the ATHENA COVID-19 Coordination Centre on: Tel: (07) 4243 4813 or email: ATHENACV19@health.qld.gov.au



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