

22 June 2020

Dear General Practitioner

I write to you on behalf of the seven PHNs across Queensland to express our support for the ATHENA COVID-19 project, a timely new research study examining positive COVID-19 diagnoses. The CEOs endorse this collective letter of support to GPs prepared by Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN.

The study aims to describe outcomes in all people diagnosed with COVID-19 in Queensland, over time and in relation to patient characteristics, by linking COVID-19 notification, hospital, general practice and death data.

It is essential we collect and analyse Australian- and state-specific data as the epidemic continues, as outcomes are dependent on a number of region-specific factors as well as the public health actions taken by individuals and Government.

The participation of general practice in this study is vital – patient health information collected in the general practice setting contains detailed and up-to-date information on patient characteristics, including health conditions and medications at the time of infection.

ATHENA COVID-19 will be led by Professor Kim Greaves, consultant cardiologist at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

In addition to the information provided in this pack, a GP liaison officer from the ATHENA COVID-19 project team will contact individual general practices to further explain the details of the study and inform you if specific patient(s) have tested positive for the virus.

The project team will be contacting patients individually to obtain consent for release of their GP data and GPs will also have the option of contacting patients themselves first to let them know they will be contacted by the project team.

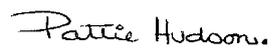
Patient confidentiality is of paramount concern to the PHN, and we are more than satisfied Kim and the project team have ethical methodologies in place and have robust processes to maintain the integrity and safety of any collected data.

This compelling project is moving quickly and aims to approach all patients, analyse all data and have prepared a full report by December 2020.

The main findings of the study will be circulated in RACGP and PHN newsletters, and will no doubt be much anticipated. Your contribution would be highly valued.

I would like to take the opportunity here, again on behalf of PHNs across the state, to thank you for your responsiveness and agility in helping to manage the pandemic so far, and to reaffirm our commitment to supporting general practice wherever we can.

Yours faithfully



Pattie Hudson
Chief Executive Officer
Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN
(for and on behalf of PHN Queensland)