



Online Participant Information Statement for the study: 'Looking for smart tips to play safe with your partners met online? Check this out!'

Information for participants

This two page document contains information you should be aware of before participating in the CHAT SMART study (<http://chatsmart.csrh.org>). This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of UNSW Australia (HREC Ref: #HC13357).

About the project

Many gay and bisexual men used online dating/hooking-up sites and a significant proportion of these men report sexual risk-taking with partners they have met online. This project aims to raise awareness of specific risks associated with online dating/hooking-up and to promote online and offline behaviours aimed at staying safe. The project consists of an experimental intervention study in health promotion.

Who is being asked to participate?

The study is intended for HIV-negative men aged 18-29 years who have sex with guys they meet via the internet or phone apps.

What does participation entail?

If you consent to participate, you will first be asked to answer a few questions about yourself. You will then be invited to read information about online dating/hooking-up and ways to reduce the risk of HIV transmission with partners met online. After this, you will have the opportunity to give feedback and indicate whether you think this information could influence your future behaviours. You will need around 10 minutes to complete this survey. You also have the option to register for a 5-minute follow-up survey in three months from now. The follow-up survey is particularly important for this research as it aims to explore whether the intervention has influenced the way you date or hook-up online.

Each participant will receive feedback based on their answers in the first part of the survey - half of all participants will receive this feedback in concise form, the other half will receive a more extended version of this feedback.

Warning

The intervention study contains texts and questions related to sex between men, sexual risk-taking practices and the risk of HIV transmission. If you are not comfortable with these topics we advise you not to take part in the study. In case you participate and have concerns related to the study you are invited to contact the study team directly to discuss anything further.

Confidentiality

The first survey can be completed anonymously. If you register for the follow-up study you will need to provide an email address so we can send you the link to a follow-up questionnaire. Your email address will be kept strictly confidential and will not be linked to your survey responses.

Risks and benefits

We do not anticipate any specific risks associated with your participation in this study. Similarly, we cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any direct benefits as a result of your participation. Participants in the 'exposed group' will, however, receive advice on ways to reduce the risk of HIV transmission. This advice may benefit their sexual health. The project will also assist in the development of policy and health education campaigns for gay and bisexual men living in Australia. The project has been developed to directly inform the activities of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO).

Payment and reimbursement for participants

No payment or reimbursement is provided for participation in this study.

Feedback to participants

Preliminary results will be available from December 2014. The easiest way to access survey results will be to consult the study website (<http://chatsmart.csrh.org>) or the UNSW Centre for Social Research in Health website at <http://csrh.arts.unsw.edu.au>.

Your consent and participation

You will be asked to give your informed consent online if you decide to participate in the project. Your participation is voluntary and your decision to participate or withdraw your participation will not affect your future relations with the University of New South Wales and AFAO. You are free to discontinue the survey at any time.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission, except as required by law. By providing your consent online at the beginning of each digital questionnaire, you give to the study investigators at the UNSW Centre for Social Research in Health and the Australian Federation of Aids organisations the permission to use the survey data and discuss/publish the survey results. In any presentation/publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

Withdrawal

You are free to withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. However, you will not be able to withdraw from the study after submitting your responses to the initial online survey. This is because it will not be possible to identify which responses were provided by individual participants. If you register to take part in the follow-up study you will have the option of de-registering at any time if you don't want to receive the follow-up questionnaire. To de-register, simply send an email to philippe.adam@unsw.edu.au with the message 'STOP CHAT SMART STUDY' in the subject heading.

Information and support services

The NSW Sexual Health Infoline provides free and confidential sexual health information at 1800 451 624 (NSW only). ACON provides a range of counselling, therapy and support services. Contact ACON's Counselling Team on (02) 9206 2000 or 1800 063 060. For the hearing impaired, call (02) 9283 2088. Other information can also be found at www.thedramadownunder.info

Contact us

The study is conducted by the UNSW Centre for Social Research in Health (<https://csr.h.arts.unsw.edu.au/>) and the Australian Federation of Aids Organisations (www.afao.org.au). If you have any questions about the study or your participation, please feel free to ask. You can contact Dr Philippe Adam at philippe.adam@unsw.edu.au or by phoning 02 9385 6776.

Complaints

Complaints may be directed to:

The Ethics Secretariat

The University of New South Wales, Sydney 2052

Tel: 9385 4234

Fax: 9385 6648

ethics.sec@unsw.edu.au

Any complaint you make will be investigated promptly and you will be informed of the outcome.

Online Participant Information Statement ends here.