

Participant Information Sheet

Water Immersion Water Birth Training Package Evaluation Study

Introduction

You are invited to take part in this research project because you will be undertaking the Water Immersion for Labour and Birth e-learning training package and optional face-to-face workshop.

This Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form provides an overview of the research project. It explains what your involvement will include/require. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research.

Please read this information carefully.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. Your consent to participate will be implied after you have reviewed the information, accessed and completed the self-initiated survey.

What is Water Immersion Water Birth Blended Education Program?

The Water Immersion for Labour and Birth Blended Education Program was developed by the Clinical Skills Development Service to support the learning of maternity clinicians in the facilitation of water immersion for labour and birth. This e-learning package was developed with public hospital executive, consumers, educators and practising clinicians to standardise and improve the accessibility of education on water immersion and birth.

The e-learning package is comprised of three online modules which provide foundational knowledge, with each module designed to take approximately 80 minutes to complete and progress sequentially. Each module includes interactive learning material and concludes with an assessment. Pass rate is 100% and feedback is provided for incorrect responses and multiple attempts are allowed. Module One introduces water immersion for labour and birth; Module Two outlines clinical considerations for labour and birth in water; Module Three covers neonatal considerations and water immersion in the context of complexity.

The e-learning package is intended to be delivered in a 'blended format' with a local hospital practical component included as an optional face-to-face workshop. The practical face-to-face component consists of working through three clinical scenarios and will be delivered by a local facilitator. The e-learning package is a pre-requisite for enrolment in the face-to-face workshop.

What is the purpose of this research?

The use of warm water immersion for labour and birth has been demonstrated to improve women's perceptions of autonomy, control and positivity. However, uptake of this effective non-pharmacological pain relief option in Queensland is low. During 2021 only 1,969 (3.1%) of the 64 111 births occurred in water, with slightly more women (4,005, 6.3%) using warm water immersion for pain relief.

The low uptake is likely the result of multiple complexities, including skilled workforce to provide water immersion, hospital facilities with suitable birthing pools, practitioner bias toward this as a reputable pain relief option, and the vast variation in local workplace policy and procedure which precludes a significant portion of women from accessing pools.

The purpose of the research project is to evaluate the impact of the e-learning and face to face education package for maternity clinicians in caring for women using warm water immersion for labour and birth. Specifically, the research project will:

1. Evaluate clinician confidence and competence in offering/providing water immersion water births for women in Queensland pre and post completion of the e-training and face-to-face education package.
2. Evaluate if there is an increase in rates of water immersion births compared with the rates prior to the implementation of the e-learning and face-to-face education package across Queensland.
3. Evaluate the clinical outcomes for women using water immersion water births

It is anticipated that the findings of this research will identify future education and training needs to improve clinician confidence and competence in provision of water immersion for labour and birth option and clinical outcomes for women.

What does participation in this research involve?

If you agree to the participate in this research project, you will be asked to complete a pre- and two post-training surveys. Each survey takes around 10 minutes to complete.

This will involve completion of an online survey (prior to commencement of the WILB e-learning package and face-to-face workshop), a second-matched on-line survey immediately following completion of the e-learning package, and finally a third-matched on-line survey will be distributed six months following completion of the e-learning package and face-to-face workshop training. Consent will be implied if you complete the online surveys.

There will be no costs associated with participating in this research project, nor will you receive payment.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

What do I have to do?

If you would like to participate in the research, please access the online survey link embedded on the Water Immersion for Labour and Birth (WILB) online page on the Clinical Skills Development Service webpage.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you of taking part. However, you will contribute to in-depth understanding of the impact of the water immersion for labour and birth training package. Your input into this project may help inform future training packages/resources and clinical outcomes and birthing satisfaction for women.

What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?

The only inconvenience will be the time taken for you to participate to complete the 3 online surveys. If completing the surveys raise distressing feelings for you, you may like talk with your Employee Assistance Program.

What will the information collected be used for?

The information collected from the surveys will be used to evaluate the impact of the e-learning and face to face education package for maternity clinicians in caring for women using warm water immersion for labour and birth.

How will your privacy be protected?

All information collected about you will be confidential. The survey does not ask you for information that will identify you individually. It will not be possible to link your survey responses back to you.

Only members of the research team will have access to the study data. We will follow the Metro North Health and Hospital Service Research Data Management Policies and Procedures (or future versions of this Policy, if it is updated). We will store the study data for at least 5 years after the end of the project.

What will happen if you decide not to take part?

Taking part in this survey is voluntary. You do not have to take part.

Even if you decide to take part now, but change your mind later, you can withdraw at any time before you submit your survey response. If you decide to withdraw, simply close your browser to exit the survey. You do not have to give a reason. There will be no penalty and we will not contact you again. Once you submit your survey response, it will not be possible to withdraw it as it will not be identifiable to you.

Your decision about whether to take part, or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the Clinical Skills Development Service, Queensland Health. Your employer will not know whether you took part in this survey or not.

Can I hear about the results of the study?

Our team will provide a report on the outcome of the study. In addition, the findings of the study will be included in publications and will also be presented at future professional conferences.

Who is doing the research?

Associate Professor Lauren Kearney, Conjoint Associate Professor of Midwifery, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work.

Dr Mia McLanders, Manager – Research, Clinical Skills Development Service, Metro North Health and Hospital Service, Queensland Health.

Dr Lisa Peberdy, Senior Research Fellow – Maternity, Clinical Skills Development Service, Metro North Health and Hospital Service, Queensland Health.

Ms Megan Barker, Program Director - Maternity Education Program, Clinical Skills Development Service, Metro North Health and Hospital Service, Queensland Health.

If you would like more information about the project or if you need to speak to a member of the research team please contact Dr Mia McLanders (Mia.McLanders@health.qld.gov.au).

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of Metro North Health and Hospital Service and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with the Clinical Skills Development Service Research Manager (Mia.McLanders@health.qld.gov.au). If you would like to speak to an officer of Metro North Office of Research who is not involved in the study, you may phone 07 3646 8111.

This project is compliant with the NHMRC guidance *“Ethical Considerations in Quality Assurance and Evaluation Activities” 2014*. Project ID: 100474; EX/2023/MNHA/100474.

What do I need to do to participate?

If, after reading the information above, you would like to take part in this survey, your consent to participate will be implied if you continue with the survey questions.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the study and for your consideration to participate.