

## University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) students' and staff perspectives, preferences, and drivers of hesitancy regarding the COVID-19 vaccine

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR UKZN STAFF AND STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE SURVEY**

*If the participant is unable to read, this form must be read to them exactly as written, in their chosen language and a witness must sign this form to confirm that the correct information was given and that participant has willingly consented to be in this study.*

#### **Greeting:**

Good day, my name Prof Gavin George. I am from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. We are conducting research to understand University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) students' and staff perspectives, preferences, and drivers of hesitancy regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. We are also working with Washington University in St. Louis, USA. You are invited to participate in this research study.

#### **Introduction:**

In this study we explore which COVID19 vaccine characteristics and implementation features are most important to UKZN staff and students, particularly those with vaccine hesitancy. We propose to conduct a survey and discrete choice experiment to identify the relative importance of vaccine characteristics and implementation strategies to determine how best to design vaccination programs aligned with staff and student preferences to ensure maximal uptake, lessons which could be applied to higher education institutions throughout South Africa.

#### **Invitation to participate:**

We are inviting you to participate in this research study. If you would like to participate you will need to click on the "Agree" button which indicates that

- You have read the information sheet
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

#### **What is involved in the interview?**

The online survey will take around 15 minutes to complete. The first portion of the survey will ask questions about your demographic characteristics, employment and COVID-19 experiences. The second portion of the survey will be a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE), where participants will be asked to compare two COVID-19 vaccination scenarios, across 8 DCE questions, and select the option you prefer the most.

#### **Risks and benefits**

The risks of participation in this research study are minimal. The study has procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of the information you share with us. These are described in the 'confidentiality' section of the consent form on the survey landing page. You will not be responsible for any costs related to the interview. You will not receive any direct personal benefit from participating in the interview. However, your responses may help us learn more about UKZN staff and student attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines. Further, by completing the survey you stand a chance of winning one of 10 R500 vouchers.

### **Study approval**

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Biomedical research Ethics Committee (Protocol reference number: BREC/00003505/2021).

### **Confidentiality**

The researchers will safeguard any information obtained during this study and make every effort to keep it confidential. All information collected from you during the interview will be available only to the study staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Washington University in St. Louis, and if necessary the UKZN Biomedical Research Ethics Committee. We may only share your information if we are legally required by authorities. Your name will not appear on the research forms or any of the reports. Instead, a unique study participant number will be assigned to you and used to identify your forms. A separate list will be generated with staff and student numbers of those eligible for the R500 draw. This list will not be connected to the study number will be stored separately in a password-protected file.

### **Voluntary participation and right to withdraw**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose to end your participation in the study at any time if you wish.

### **Problems and questions**

If you ever have any questions about this study, you should contact the Principal Investigator of the pilot study, Prof. Gavin George on 0312602592. If you have any questions about research subject rights or complaints or problems regarding the research, please contact the UKZN Biomedical Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

| BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION   | The Principal Investigator of this study is:  |
|---|---|
| Research Office, Westville Campus<br>Govan Mbeki Building<br>Private Bag X 54001<br>Durban, 4000<br>KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA<br>Tel: 27 31 2604769<br>Fax: 27 31 2604609<br>Email: BREC@ukzn.ac.za | Prof Gavin George<br>HEARD<br>University of KwaZulu-Natal<br>Durban, 4000<br>South Africa<br>Tel: 031 260 2592<br>Email: georgeg@ukzn.ac.za |

The PI will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have now or later.  
Thank you for your time.