



Information Sheet and Consent Form

Project Title: Understanding the contribution of physician associates to referral and recognition of cancer in primary care using online patient simulations

Thank you for considering to take part in this study, **funded by the Policy Research Unit in Cancer Awareness, Prevention and Early Diagnosis**

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): 15453/002.

We would like to invite Physician Associates during their training to participate in this research project.

Please discuss the information below with others if you wish, or ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Details of Study

What is the purpose of the study?

The study will aim to understand how Physician Associates (PA) might contribute to cancer recognition and referral in primary care using eCREST to collect the data. ECREST was developed by a multidisciplinary team including UCL medical school tutors, GP registrars, health psychologists and experts in public health; with input from medical students, experts in medical education, primary care diagnostics and health care evaluation. ECREST simulates real consultations between a junior doctor and a patient in General Practice, in which the 'patients' are presenting to their GP with respiratory symptoms.

Why is it important?

The reason this study is being conducted is to understand the clinical reasoning styles for PAs. Clinical reasoning refers to the thought processes you use to make clinical decisions, such as making a diagnosis and a management plan. Training on clinical reasoning is being increasingly recognised as essential in reducing diagnostic errors, which affect around 5-10% of patients, and can have devastating consequences for patients (Graber et al., 2005; Singh et al., 2013). PAs will have a growing role in primary care and contribute to referrals and their training is important.

What do I have to do?

All participants register to take part in the study which requires providing your email address, date of birth, and creating a username and password.



All participants will complete an online quiz about your knowledge and clinical reasoning skills, which will take approximately 15 minutes.

You will then access eCREST and have 2 weeks to complete 2 patient cases online. For each virtual patient case you will have opportunity to ask 'patients' questions using a drop down menu and receive their patient history. You will also be asked at several points throughout the consultation to provide a differential diagnosis and management plan. At the end of each case we will provide you with feedback on how a GP and GP Registrar would have managed the case and ask you to complete the 'My Learning' page after you've completed the 2 cases. Each patient case in eCREST will take approximately 20-30 minutes and should be completed individually. You can 'Exit' eCREST at any point and return by logging in using your username and password. You will be finally asked to complete a fourth case some time after completing the first 2 cases.

Please note that participation in the study is voluntary and you should not feel pressured to participate if you do not wish to. You will not be affected in any way if you decide you do not want to participate.

What happens next?

If you are willing to take part in the study, click on the 'I agree' button at the bottom of the sheet. You'll then be directed to the registration page and after you register you can start the study.

Will anyone else (e.g. my tutors/ medical school) see my scores/performance?

No. Only the researchers will have access to this data. All data will be kept confidential unless they relate to serious concerns about professional practice or the health of individuals. Your data will only be used for research purposes and it will not contribute to your final grades, be used as an assessment, or shared with any third parties. You have the option however of printing all your responses as a pdf for your own record and/or to store in your e-portfolio.

All data will be controlled and managed by a research team at UCL, Department of Applied Health Research. Their contact details can be found at the bottom of this page.

Risks and benefits

We don't anticipate there to be any risks by participating.

Participating in this research will help you to prepare for clinical practice by giving you the chance to practise making diagnostic decisions and apply your respiratory knowledge and General Practice training. You will also receive a certificate of completion, which you can add to your e-portfolio to show your involvement in research.



Data handling and confidentiality

Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (2018), 'data protection legislation'.

- All data will be collected and stored in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Data will be stored in a secure online storage repository at UCL Data Safe Haven.
- You can request to withdraw your data up to 4 weeks after using eCREST
- Downloaded data will be stored in password protected computers for analysis.
- We will collect some personal information such as your email address when you register to take part in the study but your data will then be anonymised and only the researchers at UCL will have access to this data. We may use some of the things you write in the free text responses as quotes but these will also be anonymised, with any identifying comments removed.
- Your personal data (email) will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. All other anonymised data you provide will be retained for a minimum of ten years after publication or public release according to the UCL Research Data Policy (p.3).

Data protection statement

The data controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Office provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. The legal basis for the processing of your data is [Public Task](#).

You have the right to access information we hold about you. Your right to access can be exercised in accordance with *data protection law*. In certain circumstances you also have other rights including right of having your personal data erased, corrected, restrict processing, receive personal data you have provided to us in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format or transfer to another controller (data portability) and object processing of personal data. Your rights to access change or move your information may be limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact the UCL Data protection team in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

If you remain unsatisfied, you may wish to contact the ICO. Contact details, and further details of data subject rights, are available on the ICO website at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/overview-of-the-gdpr/individuals-rights/>

What if I change my mind about taking part in the study?



It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible.

Consent

- I consent to take part in the study and confirm that I am over the age of 18 and understand what is required of me in this study.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that any personal information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- I agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction.

I agree (this study only)

I agree (retain my anonymised data for related studies and in accordance to UCL Research Data Policy)

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the:

The staff researcher: Dr Angelos Kassianos; Department of Applied Health Research
University College London 1-19 Torrington Place London WC1E 6BT;
angelos.kassianos@ucl.ac.uk; Tel. 020 7679 3291.

If you don't get a satisfactory response from the researchers please contact UCL REC:
The Office of the Vice-Provost Research, 2 Taviton Street, UCL; ethics@ucl.ac.uk, or
Professor William Fraser, Deputy Head of School (admin support: Dan Leeson
d.leeson@uea.ac.uk)

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this study.