

## Participant Information Sheet

### Exploring the experiences of people with disability who access sex worker services, in Australia

Do you live in Australia?  
Are you a person with disability?  
Are you 18 yrs or older?  
Have you ever paid a sex worker?

**\*\* If you answered yes to all four questions you are eligible to participate \*\***

To help you decide if you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. The contact details of the researcher will also be provided at the end of this document.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The study will address the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences of people with disability who have accessed sex worker services?
2. What are the motivational factors for people with disability, within Australia, to access sex worker service?

This research aims to prioritise the voices of people with disability and to create an opportunity for people to share your own experiences and stories about this topic.

People of all genders and sexual identities are welcome to participate.

#### **How does this research define 'disability'?**

The researcher is using the definition set out in the [Australian Disability Discrimination Act \(1992\)](#) which is very broad and inclusive. As the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#) states, this includes "people who have temporary and permanent disabilities; physical, intellectual, sensory, neurological, learning and psychosocial disabilities, diseases or illnesses, physical disfigurement, medical conditions, and work-related injuries".

A disability could be periodic, permanent, progressive or dynamic - where symptoms vary from day to day. Some people may identify having more than one disability.

Regardless of cause or diagnosis, **the researcher welcomes anyone who identifies as a person with disability**. This includes those who live and work independently, people supported by family, those who may rely on Disability, NDIS, Aged Care, Workers' Compensation or Insurance payout support systems, and people who are of retirement age.

### What is a sex worker?

In Australia, the preferred term for someone who provides sexual services in exchange for money, is **sex worker**. Other terms you may be familiar with, often used in the media, in movies or TV shows include: *escort, prostitute, hooker, or 'special sexual friend'*.

Sex workers can be of any gender.

### What is the definition of 'sex worker services' in this study?

For this research **sex worker services** includes in-person appointments where 'hands on' services are provided. Services can be anything the sex worker has agreed to do with you, for payment. These mutually consented activities could include 'dinner-dates', sharing conversations, practicing new sexual techniques, or re-discovering what level of sexual functioning you may have after accident or injury. It could also include nude massage, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal sex, fantasy/ role playing or anything else you have mutually consented to enjoying together.

The provision of sexual services can occur in a wide variety of locations including brothels, massage parlours, private homes, hotels, motels, apartments, safe houses, in cars, in a person's disability supported accommodation, in nursing homes, residential aged care facilities, rehab accommodation or any other location where the sex worker and the client have negotiated to meet.

### Are there sex services that are excluded?

Yes, experiences with paid on-line, video, text or phone call type of sex worker services or access to porn streaming/ Only Fans type subscription services will be excluded from this study.

### What am I required to do?

You are invited to complete an **anonymous online survey**.

It will include general demographic questions (ie. Your age, disability, location etc) and some multiple choice and open-ended questions asking about your experiences with sex workers.



You can also print the survey out and write your answers down. The free, reply paid address to send your answers to is:

Reply Paid 75953  
Western Sydney University  
PASA Research (Rachel Wotton)  
Locked Bag 1797  
Penrith NSW 2751

If you don't have access to a computer or a printer, you can also contact the researcher directly to print out and send a copy to you, with a Reply Paid envelope.

As some questions are of a sensitive nature, you might want to complete the survey in private.

The survey might take about 15 - 20 minutes to do, though some people may take longer, especially if you have a lot of information to share. As long as you don't close the survey page you can also complete the survey slowly over a number of days or weeks.

Your answers will only be included in the results if you click 'submit' at the end. You can change your mind and quit at any time and no one will know.

### **The link to the survey is provided at the end of this information sheet**

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The researcher is also looking to **interview 10-20 people**. You might want to do an interview if:

- You've had lots of experiences with different sex workers - too many stories to share in the survey
- There were things you'd like to share about being with a sex worker that weren't asked in the survey
- It is easier for you to share your story via an interview than typing everything down
- You would like to expand on your answers given in the survey

If you would like to be considered for an interview you can leave your name and contact details on a separate page at the end of the survey. Your survey answers will not be linked to your name and contact details. You can also email the researcher directly (see contact details at the end of this document).

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### **Who can participate?**

#### **Survey**

You must be:

- A person with disability,
- 18 years of age or over, and
- Have paid at least one sex worker for sexual services, in Australia

## Interview

You must be:

- Someone who is not a current or former client of the researcher
- A person with disability,
- 18 years of age or over, and
- Have paid at least one sex worker for sexual services, in Australia

## Who is the researcher?

This research study is being conducted by Rachel Wotton at Western Sydney University (WSU), School of Social Sciences. It will form the basis of her PhD. Her supervisors are Professor Kerry Robinson, Dr Peter Bansel and Dr Michael Houlbrook.

In 2016 Rachel completed her Masters research project at the University of Sydney about *Sex workers who provide services to clients with disability in New South Wales, Australia*. She has also been a sex worker for over 20 years in Australia.

Please note that she will not be able to interview current or former clients, but they are very welcome to complete the anonymous survey.

## Is it anonymous?

Yes, the online survey is anonymous.

The interviews are not anonymous, but only the research team will know your identity.

## Confidentiality/Privacy

To maintain confidentiality and privacy of participants, any sensitive and potentially identifying information captured, will be summarised in a de-identifying manner. Interview participants will be assigned a pseudonym

No one, except the research team, will know you have taken part in this study, unless you decide to personally tell someone in your life. All information collected will be stored safely and securely within the University of Western Sydney, in accordance with their Data Management Plan.

### How do I give consent?

Participation in this study is voluntary. It is your choice to be in the study. You do not have to be involved if you don't want to be. If you start the survey then decide to stop part way through, you can exit the survey at any time by simply closing the browser window.

Consent for the **survey** is given by clicking 'SUBMIT' at the end. As it is anonymous, once you submit your answers they cannot be withdrawn.

Consent for the **interview** is given by signing a consent form and reconfirmed at the start of the interview. Consent can be withdrawn at any time throughout the interview, for any reason and without question. You will be sent the transcript of the interview to check for accuracy. Consent can also be withdrawn after the interview. If the information has already been analysed, specific quotes will not be used but general information shared may be included within broad analysis and conclusions.

### Will taking part in this study cost me anything, and will I be paid?

Participation in this study will not cost you anything.

Everyone who completes the survey can enter the draw to win 1 x 4 eGift Vouchers, or a physical gift card, worth \$100 each.

Every interview participant will be given \$100 via either an e-Gift voucher or a physical gift card. If meeting in person, out of pocket transportation/ parking costs will also be reimbursed.

### What will happen with the results?

The findings will form a part of a traditional thesis, as a requirement of the researcher's PhD. They will also be shared via publications and presentations within the disability, rehab, aged care and sex work sectors. These results, as well as any media generated from this research, will be uploaded and made freely available on the designated website for this study: [www.pasa-research.com.au](http://www.pasa-research.com.au)

### What are the benefits/positives?

While there are no immediate benefits for you, some people may find sharing their stories a very positive experience, especially if you've never had an opportunity to talk openly and honestly about this topic.

This research will provide a more in-depth understanding of the experiences of people with disability who access sex worker services, in Australia. It's anticipated that this knowledge could be used to contribute to future resource and policy development. It could also help shape specific educational programs for people with disability, staff working in the disability, rehabilitation and aged care sectors, and sex workers who provide services to people with disability.



### Are there any risks?

Answering questions or talking about your personal sexual experiences and your feelings can sometimes be difficult. If you become upset or worried after participating, talking to someone you trust can often help. If you'd like to talk to someone anonymously you may also wish to contact one of the following national support services:

BeyondBlue: [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) / phone: 1300 224 636

Lifeline : [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) / phone: 13 11 14

QLife: [www.qlife.org.au](http://www.qlife.org.au) (webchat) / phone: 1800 184 527

Blue Knot: <https://blueknot.org.au/national-counselling-referral-service-disability/>  
phone: 1800 421 468

### Complaints

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC Approval Number: H14609). If you have any concerns or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you can contact the Western Sydney University Ethics Committee. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Phone: (02) 4736 0229

Email: [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au).

### Contact details

If you have further questions about the study, please contact the following people:

#### Chief Investigator

Rachel Wotton

Phone: 0402 543 052

E: [20080642@student.westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:20080642@student.westernsydney.edu.au)

#### Primary Supervisor

Dr Kerry Robinson

E: [k.robinson@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:k.robinson@westernsydney.edu.au)

#### Second Supervisor

Dr Peter Bansel

E: [P.Bansel@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:P.Bansel@westernsydney.edu.au)

Phone: (02) 9772 6325

Link to the survey: <https://tinyurl.com/2a88zyuk>

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study