

COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts on VA Healthcare Workers STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

SAN FRANCISCO VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO

This is a research study designed to find out how working in a VA healthcare facility during the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted frontline healthcare workers and how VA can better support them.

You are being contacted because you were identified as either a frontline healthcare worker in a unit impacted by the pandemic, or a stakeholder involved in improving healthcare workers' wellbeing.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. If you have questions, you can contact the principal investigator: Natalie Purcell, PhD, Natalie.Purcell@va.gov or [insert other contact information].

Why is this study being done?

We are doing this study because we want to find out how working in a VA healthcare facility during the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted frontline healthcare workers and how VA can better support them. To do this, we need to learn about the experiences of workers who have significant moral and psychological distress related to their work during the pandemic as well as those who do not. We want to learn about the conditions that can put workers at risk for moral injury and psychological distress or can protect them from it. This will help us identify what healthcare organizations can do to better prevent and address moral and psychological distress among healthcare workers in the future.

Who pays for this study?

The study is paid for by the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health, part of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you are a frontline healthcare worker, you may be invited to complete a 10-minute secure online survey about your experience at work during the COVID-19 pandemic, including impacts on your mental health and wellbeing.

If you complete the survey and are interested in completing a follow-up interviews, you may be invited to participated in a 60-minute telephone interview at a time that is convenient for you.

If you are a VA administrator or leader, you may be invited to participate in a focus group to share feedback on a draft strategy to help healthcare organizations better understand and respond to the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on VA healthcare workers.

Where is the study located?

The researchers are located at the San Francisco VA Healthcare System, but participation in the study happens remotely—through a secure online survey, a telephone interview, or a virtual focus group.

How long will I be in the study?

Surveys take about 10 minutes. Telephone interviews and focus groups take about 60 minutes.

Can I stop being in the study?

Yes. If you are taking a survey, you can close your browser to end at any time. If you are participating in an interview or focus group, you can leave at any time.

What risks can I expect from being in the study?

If you participate, you may be asked you to reflect on difficult or even traumatic workplace experiences. These questions can bring up unpleasant or distressing emotions. After participating, you will receive VA web resources in case you continue to feel unpleasant emotions after the interview or want someone to talk with about them.

Are there benefits to taking part in the study?

There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this study, but what we learn from it may other healthcare workers in the future by better equipping healthcare systems to prevent and address moral and psychological distress among healthcare workers.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this study?

You are free to choose not to participate in the study. If you decide not to take part in this study, there will be no penalty to you. There will be no impact whatsoever on your employment or benefits at VA, and we will not share information about your participation with your supervisor.

Will information about me be kept private?

Surveys are confidential and can be completed anonymously. However, you will no longer be anonymous if you choose to share your contact information with us for a follow-up interview.

Focus group participation is not anonymous either. Other participants will see your face and hear your first name or any other information you choose to share out loud during the group.

We will do our best to make sure that the personal information gathered for this study is kept private. However, we cannot guarantee total privacy. Your personal information may be given out if required by law. Authorized representatives from the following organizations may review your research data for the purpose of monitoring or managing the conduct of this study:

- University of California, San Francisco
- San Francisco VA Health Care System
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

We may share your research information in the future, but we will not share any information that could identify you. If information from this study is published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal information will not be used.

What are the costs of taking part in this study?

There are no specific costs associated with taking part in this study.

Will I be paid for taking part in this study?

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

Taking part in this study is your choice. You may choose either to take part or not to take part in the study. If you decide to take part in this study, you may stop participating at any time. No matter what decision you make, there will be no penalty to you in any way.

Who can answer my questions about the study?

If you have questions about this study in the future, you can contact [Study Coordinator name and contact information]. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can call the UCSF Institutional Review Board at 415-476-1814.