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Study title: COVID-19 in Review: The long-term sequelae following COVID-19 infection, 2020

Good day.

We, the DATCOV team at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, are doing research on Long COVID, which refers to ongoing symptoms and complications of COVID-19. Research is a process used in seeking new knowledge. In this study we want to learn how many people in South Africa are likely to have experienced Long COVID and what kinds of symptoms they experienced, how severe and for how long. This study is being done to better understand how severe Long COVID is in South Africa, and whether we need to put in place messaging, health information and specific health services for people who are suffering from Long COVID.

We are inviting you to take part in a research study.

What is involved in the study: To participate in the study, we will be doing questionnaire with you over the telephone. This will take approximately 20 minutes of your time and will be done in the language you are most comfortable with. We will be asking you questions about symptoms you have and how your ability to carry out your daily activities have been affected after your discharge from hospital with COVID-19. We will call you once now for the first interview, and then repeat another call at 6 months after your discharge from hospital. Besides answering our questions on the phone call, you will not be required to do anything further.

Risks of being involved in the study: There will be no direct risk for you in participating in this study. You may experience fatigue or tiredness because of the length of the telephone survey, but if you do we can stop and resume later when you are able to.

Benefits of being in the study: There may be no direct benefit to you in participating in this study. We hope to understand Long COVID better and to put in place health messaging and health services for people who suffer from it. You may benefit from these health messages and health services once the study has been completed and these services have been put in place. Your involvement is very important as it will help other people who are diagnosed with COVID-19 and who may experience Long COVID in the future. Our study team will share with you by email or WhatsApp, the findings of the study and how it has informed the delivery of health care for Long COVID sufferers.

What to do if you have symptoms of Long COVID: If you are having moderate or severe ongoing symptoms related to COVID-19 you should seek health care from your general practitioner, local clinic or hospital. Please do relay your concern to our researcher during or after the interview. The researcher, with your permission, will provide your details to the relevant managers in the provincial Department of Health, and request them to follow up with you for referral to care.

Participation is voluntary, and refusing to participate will not affect you at all and will not affect you being able to seek health care now or in the future. You may stop the interview at any time

and you do not have to provide a reason for not wanting to participate. Any information we have collected from you will then be destroyed.

There is to be no payment or cost associated with participating in this study, except for sending a Whatsapp message to confirm consent. The call will be made to you through cellular connection and not using data service so you do not incur a cost of the call.

Confidentiality: All your personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be available to the Principal Investigators (PI). When reporting the findings of the study, your name and personal details will not be included.

All data collected in the course of the study will be securely stored for two (2) years, if a scientific publication arises from the study. Thereafter it will be destroyed accordingly.

Contact details of researcher/s: Please do contact us if you require further information, or wish to report any concerns

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This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical) of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg ("Committee"). A principal function of this Committee is to safeguard the rights and dignity of all human subjects who agree to participate in a research project and the integrity of the research.

If you have any concern over the way the study is being conducted, please contact the Chairperson of this Committee who is Professor Clement Penny, who may be contacted on telephone number 011 717 2301, or by e-mail on Clement.Penny@wits.ac.za. The telephone numbers for the Committee secretariat are 011 717 2700/1234 and the e-mail addresses are Zanele.Ndlovu@wits.ac.za and Rhulani.Mukansi@wits.ac.za

Thank you for your time.

Date: January 2021

Regards



Dr Waasila Jassat