

Invitation to participate in the Doctors in Secondary Schools Evaluation

Hello

You have been invited to participate in a survey to inform the evaluation of the **Doctors in Secondary Schools program**, which is a program that seeks to provide more accessible primary health care to secondary school students by offering GP services on school premises. Delivered jointly between the Victorian Department of Education and Training and local primary health networks, the school your child attends is one of the 100 schools across Victoria that are participating in the program. Your child may also be invited to participate in a survey (see more information below), even if your child may not have used the GP services as part of program.

Purpose of the evaluation

DET has asked Synergistiq, an independent consulting company based in Melbourne, to evaluate the effectiveness of program. You and your child's feedback will be used to learn about what is working well and what can be improved.

How the evaluation will work

Your participation

Your voice as the parent / carer is very important to us; as any information you share can help us to make the program better. The online survey will take approximately **15 minutes**. If you are happy to participate in the survey, please follow the webpage link below to complete the survey questions at your convenience:

www.research.net/r/DiSS_F_T3_P13

Your child's participation

Your child may or may not have used the GP services as part of program, however some students in **Year 11** may choose to participate in a focus group with up to 4 others (5 in total). During the focus group, a trained facilitator will engage the students in conversations to discuss:

- whether they have used the services provided by DiSS
- their satisfaction with the service
- if they have not used the services provided by DiSS, the reason why they have not used the clinic.

The focus group will go for around thirty minutes. Your child can withdraw at any time during participation. We do not expect that participation in the focus group will be difficult or distressing. However, should they feel uncomfortable in any they are free to stop and support will be offered and provided if requested/ required.

● If your child is a **Year 9 or Year 11 student**, they may also be invited to participate in the evaluation through a short survey, which includes a series of questions that explores access to health services, the GP in school and some general health and wellbeing topics during a designated hour at school. For example:

- Has there been any time over the past year that you did not receive medical care when you thought you needed it?
- Have you had symptoms of asthma or taken treatment for asthma in the last 12 months?
- Have you attended any appointments at the school-based clinic?

Their participation will only be requested if they are in one of the year 9 or year 11 classes selected at random. The survey will be completed during school time and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Responses to the survey questions will be put together with information collected from other surveys.

Do I or my child have to participate in this evaluation?

While you and your child's participation would be greatly appreciated, your participation is voluntary and whether you decide to take part in this evaluation is entirely up to you. There will be no negative consequences for yourself or your child if you do not wish to participate or do not wish your child to participate.

Please contact the school if you **do not** want your child to participate in the survey.

How is the information used in the evaluation?

The survey is completely **anonymous** and no one can relate the information back your child or to you. However, as a result, if you choose to withdraw from the evaluation, or your consent for your child's participation, after data is collected it will not be possible to remove the data. Your child can withdraw at any time during participation. We do not expect that completing the survey will be difficult or distressing to either you or your child. However, should they feel uncomfortable in any they are free to stop and support will be provided.

A summary of this information will go into a report for the Victorian Government that explains how the program has performed and what outcomes have been achieved for young Victorians.

Any information we collect will be kept on our secure server or in a locked office and only accessible to our research team. All data and information collected during the evaluation will be destroyed after a period of 7 years.

Mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect

Under law it is mandatory to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to a government authority. If, throughout the course of this evaluation, the evaluation team or DiSS staff receive information from children or adolescents of any abuse or neglect, or have suspicion of any child abuse or neglect, they are required by law to report this to the relevant child protection agency.

Thank you!



For any further information concerning this project

For questions about DiSS evaluation: Dr Melinda McPherson (Project Manager) on 03 9946 6800 or at Melinda.McPherson@synergistiq.com

If you or your child is experiencing any distress or discomfort, and would like to speak to somebody about how you are feeling, please contact: Lifeline Support Services at: 13 11 14

For complaints: If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about being an evaluation participant in general, please contact the Department of Education and Training on (03) 9097 71170 or doctors.in.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au.