**Research Project Title:** Treating co-morbid depression and nicotine dependence in primary care: The Webquit pilot study

I am writing to let you know about a research project that you have the option to take part in. The research is being conducted by the School of Public Health & Community Medicine at the University of New South Wales. I am contacting you because you and your general practice team may be interested in participating in this study.

This research is being done to learn more about how we can assist smokers with depression to quit smoking in primary care. The reason we want to know more about this area is because people with depression are approximately twice as likely to be smokers and encounter greater difficulty quitting than people who are not depressed. Compared to people who smoke in the general population, smokers with depression are more nicotine dependant, more likely to relapse after quitting, and have a greater risk for smoking-related morbidity and mortality.

Smoking cessation has major benefits for both physical and mental health, although the benefits for the latter have not been recognised until recently. Recent research findings assert evidence that smoking cessation is associated with improved mental health and quality of life compared to continued smoking.

The Webquit program is an innovative and evidence-based approach developed to assist people with depression to quit smoking. The intervention integrates a program delivered via the Internet with support provided in general practice. Webquit is novel in that it addresses both depression and nicotine dependence together and is facilitated and tailored to individual need by the practice nurse in collaboration with the GP. This study aims to pilot test the Webquit intervention in general practice in order to evaluate its acceptability and feasibility to both patients and health care providers.

Taking part in research is always optional. We are looking for general practices in Sydney who want to take part in this research and who:

* Employ one or more practice nurse
* Have access to the internet

If you decide to take part in this research, the roles of the PN & GP are outlined below:

**Role of the PN**

* Attend a 1-day training workshop about the Webquit study (a reimbursement of $300 will be provided to compensate for time)
* Conduct a search of the records to identify potential patient participants with assistance from study staff (a reimbursement of $200 will be provided for practice assistance with patient recruitment)
* Invite potential participants to attend an initial assessment visit estimated to take 45-60 minutes (a reimbursement of $60 will be provided per patient to compensate for PN time)
* Facilitate patient completion of the Webquit modules through regular progress reviews as guided by a recommended schedule - expected to consist of 3 phone calls and 3 face-to-face practice visits per patient
* Conduct a 6-month follow-up visit to review the patient’s current smoking activity and mood, estimated to take 30 minutes (a reimbursement of $30 will be provided per patient to compensate for PN time)
* Participating PNs will personally receive a $100 gift voucher to thank them for their individual efforts with the study

**Role of the GP**

* Consult patients regarding pharmacological treatment of smoking cessation in accordance with clinical practice guidelines and PBS requirements
* Provide support to PNs as required, including review of patients if any concerns raised regarding mood

At the end of the intervention a small selection of GPs and PNs will be invited to participate in a 15-30 minute telephone interview to explore feasibility, acceptability and value of the intervention. Each participating GP/PN will receive a $50 gift voucher to thank them for their time. All participating GPs & PNs will also receive recognition for continuing professional development.

If you would like more information or are interested in being part of the research, please contact:

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| **Name:** | Nicholas Zwar |
| **Email:** | n.zwar@unsw.edu.au |
| **Phone:** | 0417063061 |
| **Website:** | https://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/ |

If we have not heard from you in 2 weeks, a member of our research team will call to speak with you by phone and answer any questions you may have.

Taking part in research is voluntary. You may choose not to take part. If you decide not to take part in this research, you decision will have no effect on your relationship with The University of New South Wales.

This research has been reviewed and approved by The University of New South Wales Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or concerns about the research project please email humanethics@unsw.edu.au or phone +61 2 9385 6222 quoting the following number HC16240.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Zwar

Professor of General Practice

University of New South Wales