



Figure S1. COVID-19 resources available within the RACGP website used by respondents

Table S1. Adequacy of PPE training and respondents' level of confidence in using PPE for managing COVID-19

GPs		
	n	%
<i>Adequacy of PPE training</i>		
Not at all adequate	3	3.5
Slightly adequate	4	4.7
Somewhat adequate	19	22.1
Mostly adequate	49	57.0
Entirely adequate	11	12.8
<i>Confidence in using PPE</i>		
Not at all confident	12	5.2
Slightly confident	35	15.0
Somewhat confident	75	32.2
Mostly confident	88	37.8
Entirely confident	23	9.9

Table S2. Respondents' participation in COVID-19 outbreak response activities

<i>COVID-19 Outbreak response activities</i>	<i>Yes n (%)</i>	<i>No n (%)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Reviewing and updating policies or procedures	125 (51.2)	119 (48.8)	244
Establishing fever clinics	33 (13.5)	211 (86.5)	244
Training in donning and doffing PPE	73 (29.9)	171 (70.1)	244
Supporting healthcare staff	117 (48)	127 (52)	244
Supporting other staff	116 (47.5)	128 (52.5)	244
Planning for surge capacity	54 (22.1)	190 (77.9)	244

Table S3. COVID-19 support services provided by respondents' workplace and respondents' attendance and access

Support services provided by the practice/facility	n (%)
Yes, debriefing only	55 (23.8)
Yes, staff psychological support only	13 (5.6)
Yes, both	31 (13.4)
Neither	111 (48.1)
Do not know	21 (9.1)
Total	231 (100)

Attending debriefings and how useful it was	
No	144 (62.3)
Yes, but it was not useful	6 (2.6)
Yes, and it was slightly useful	23 (10)
Yes, and it was moderately useful	39 (16.9)
Yes, and it was extremely useful	19 (8.2)
Total	231 (100)

Accessing psychological services and how useful it was	
No	221 (95.7)
Yes, but it was not useful	2 (0.9)
Yes, and it was slightly useful	2 (0.9)
Yes, and it was moderately useful	4 (1.7)
Yes, and it was extremely useful	2 (0.9)
Total	231 (100)

Table S4. Respondents' comments on significant challenge about COVID-19

	Examples of respondents' comments	Number of comments (%)
PPE issues	<i>'PPE has not been readily available to GPs nor testing kits. Without protection and tools what can we do'</i> (Respondent 16)	23 comments (20%)
	<i>'There has been an absolute dearth of available PPE in early stages. We have received almost no PPE over the last three months'</i> (Respondent 24)	
	<i>'I should point out that access to PPE has been a major issue. It has been one of the major difficulties encountered by primary care'</i> (Respondent 22)	
Stress	<i>'I felt totally unprepared at the start and extremely anxious. I feel somewhat more prepared now but due to my age group still fearful of contracting COVID-19'</i> (Respondent 28)	18 comments (15.7%)
	<i>'Most stressful aspects have been the increase in demands in the workplace, needing to adapt to teleconsulting for which we have had no training. Also, I am vulnerable due to a health condition and the increased workload has impacted my health'</i> Respondent 64)	
Keeping up with inconsistent and rapidly changing information	<i>'I have found the volume of information and the rapid rate of change in information over a prolonged period rather overwhelming'</i> (Respondent 32)	16 comments (13.9%)
	<i>'There is so much information to consume, rapidly changing and so many teleconferences to attend'</i> (Respondent 12)	
Planning and management issues	<i>'I am a rural VMO and very connected to the LHD response plan. Both, LHD and NSW health displayed belated leadership when it as being sorted by primary care'</i> (Respondent 23)	15 comments (13%)
	<i>'Had we had a much more extensive outbreak I have no confidence that GP was ready to take up where the hospital system left off'</i> (Respondent 17)	
Need of harmonised protocols and guidelines across general practices	<i>'A standardised protocol for GP clinics to follow would have helped'</i> (Respondent 4)	13 comments (11.3%)
	<i>'No uniformity among practices handling COVID-19 patients'</i> (Respondent 1)	

Lack of involvement in planning the local response	<i>'GP contribution has been entirely reactive and we have had no role in the planning for the local response'</i> (Respondent 19)	10 comments (8.7%)
	<i>'We could and should have had strong primary care representation in state and federal disaster preparedness and planning'</i> (Respondent 24)	
Telehealth	<i>'At the beginning, I attempted to work via telehealth but practice IT infrastructure was inadequate to allow this. Has now been upgraded and would hopefully function well if in a similar situation in the future'</i> (Respondent 30)	7 comments (6.1%)
	<i>'Telehealth needs good technology and in rural areas we do not have mobile coverage. Older people and those who are deaf are struggling with tele anything!'</i> (Respondent 54)	
Workload	<i>'COVID-19 effectively becomes a full-time job in addition to a full-time workload'</i> (Respondent 12)	6 comments (5.2%)
	<i>'Initial few weeks with influx of worried patients, constantly changing and updating info and advice was very busy and demanding'</i> (Respondent 49)	
Financial impact	<i>'I have lost 30-40% income'</i> (Respondent 60)	5 comments (4.4%)
	<i>'The effect of lower patient numbers has had on our practice's financial viability has been very stressful'</i> (Respondent 81)	
Complacency	<i>'People in our community don't do the right thing and should be charged with criminal negligence'</i> (Respondent 40)	2 comments (1.7%)
	<i>'We have been lucky and we adequately socially distanced in time. But we are, as a society, far too relaxed now'</i> (Respondent 98)	

General Practitioners and COVID-19: Have your say!

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS' KNOWLEDGE, PREPAREDNESS AND EXPERIENCES OF MANAGING SARS-COV-2 and COVID-19 IN AUSTRALIAN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDY

Participant Information Statement (HREC 2020/200)

(1) What is this study about?

We would like to invite you to take part in a RACGP approved research study about General Practitioners' knowledge, preparedness and experiences of managing SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 in the Australian healthcare settings. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a member of the RACGP; the RACGP has approved this study of its members, General Practitioners, who are front-line healthcare workers with a fundamental role in managing the health and wellbeing of the Australian community.

This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. Participation in this research study is voluntary. By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you understand what you have read, agree to take part in the research study as outlined below, and agree to the use of your personal information as described.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being led by Professor Ramon Z. Shaban from the University of Sydney and Western Sydney Local Health District with his general practitioner colleagues Associate Professor Charlotte Hesse and Dr Penelope Burns together with researchers Dr Cecilia Li, Dr Cristina Sotomayor-Castillo and Dr Shizar Nahidi from the University of Sydney. This study is an unfunded investigator-initiated project, and we do not require any additional resources to those available to us in our usual employment to ensure successful completion of this study. The researchers declare no conflicts of interest.

(3) What will the study involve for me?

We would like you to complete a short, anonymous online survey comprising of four sections. Section 1 asks a few demographic questions about you. Section 2 asks questions about your knowledge of COVID-19. In Section 3 we explore aspects about your preparedness for COVID-19, including training, provision of information and availability of guidelines. In the last section we explore your experiences of working as a General Practitioner in the context of COVID-19. We ask that you do not include any personally identifying information in the survey responses. Most questions will have pre-defined answers; however, some will ask for a written response. Should you wish to do so, you are welcome to expand your replies or make any other comments at the end of the survey. By ticking the "I agree to participate" checkbox at the end of this statement you consent to participate in this study.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

We estimate the survey will take you 10 minutes to complete.

(5) Who can take part in the study?

This is a survey of members of the RACGP. We are conducting a similar survey of 9 other frontline healthcare workers including infectious diseases physicians, infection control practitioners, emergency physicians, emergency nurses, intensivists, critical care nurses, public health physicians, paramedics and anaesthetists via their professional college or society.

(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the RACGP, the researchers, anyone else at the University of Sydney or any other organisation. Submitting your completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You can withdraw your responses any time before you have submitted the questionnaire. Once you have submitted it, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

The risks to you participating in this study are low/negligible. The study is an anonymous online survey, participation is voluntary. Aside from giving up your valuable time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study. There is no information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you. All collected information will remain confidential and will only be accessed by the investigators. No data that identifies you will be reported in publications or presentations arising from the study. The information you provide will only be used for the purpose of this research study, and will only be disclosed with your permission, except as required by law.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

While we cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefits from being in the study, this study will provide valuable information about your knowledge, preparedness and experiences of managing COVID-19 in the Australian healthcare settings. This information will help to identify gaps in infection control preparedness, inconsistencies between international and national guidelines, and any evidence-practice gaps in General Practice.

(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting your survey responses for the purposes of this research study. The information you provide will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement. There is no information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you. All collected information will remain confidential and will only be accessed by the researchers. The information you provide will be stored securely and kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. It is anticipated that the results of this research study will be published and/or presented in a variety of scientific forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you or your general practice/healthcare facility cannot be identified, except with your express permission. All data will be stored on password-protected confidential servers within the Western Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney Westmead Campus, in accordance with prevailing legislation policies at both institutions. In accordance with The University of Sydney Policy, records for this study will be stored securely for five years following publication of the results before destruction.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(11) What if I would like further information about the study?

For more information about the study please contact Coordinating Principal Investigator Professor Ramon Z. Shaban via email office.professor-shaban@sydney.edu.au or telephone 02 8627 3117

(12) Will I be told the results of the study?

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. This feedback will be in the form of a one-page lay summary. No personalised feedback will be provided. If you wish to receive the one-page lay summary, please provide your email address at the end of the survey. You will receive this feedback after the study is completed.

(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney (HREC 2020/200). The study has also been approved for distribution by the RACGP. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies. If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the University HREC using the details outlined below quoting the study title and protocol number:

The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney. Telephone +61 2 8627 8176. Email: human.ethics@sydney.edu.au, Facsimile: 02 8627 8117

By ticking the "I agree to participate" checkbox, you consent to participate in this study.

I agree to participate

This is a list of the acronyms used in the survey:

SARS-CoV-2: Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease 2019

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What is your country of residence?

- Australia
- New Zealand
- Other

2. In which Australian state or territory do you currently or ordinarily work?

- Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Tasmania
- Victoria
- Western Australia
- I don't live in Australia

3. How many years have you worked in your professional field as of 01 January 2020?

SECTION 2: KNOWLEDGE In this section we would like to ask some questions about what you know about COVID-19.

4. Where do you routinely go for up-to-date information about COVID-19? (Please select all that apply)(Please select all that apply)

- World Health Organization website
- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website
- Australia Government Health Protection Principal Committee
- 2019 Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare
- Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) Guidelines
- State/territory departments of health website
- Commonwealth Department of Health website
- Colleagues
- Scientific literature and journals
- Social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook),
- Television, radio or newspaper
- RACGP website
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce
- Other

5. Which of the following RACGP website COVID-19 resources do you use? (Please select all that apply)

- National Webinars
- Podcasts
- Australian Journal of General Practice COVID-19 webpage
- Criteria for probable and suspected cases
- Assessment and testing of patients with suspected mild COVID-19
- Management of suspected cases in general practice
- RACGP COVID-19 infection control principles
- New MBS items for phone and video consultation
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- Psychological supports for GPs and patients
- COVID-19 Safe Fact Sheet
- None of the above

6. How would you rate your current level of knowledge about COVID-19?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

7. Information about this outbreak changes rapidly. How easy or difficult is it to keep up-to-date with the following areas of information about COVID-19?

	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Very easy
Case definition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Epidemiology (Data on the number of cases and locations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clinical presentation, signs, symptoms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laboratory testing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infection prevention and control measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of personal protect equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Treatment and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Isolation practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contact tracing and outbreak management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel advisory and restrictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public health orders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 3: PREPAREDNESS

In this section we want to know about aspects of preparedness for COVID-19.

8. Have you completed any general outbreak management education and training?

- Yes
 No

8a. Who provided this education and training?

- Internal program run within my general practice/healthcare facility
 RACGP
 External program

9. Are you a member of a COVID-19 planning or response committee? (Please select all that apply)

- Yes, at local practice level
 Yes, at hospital level
 Yes, at health district level
 Yes, at corporate practice level
 Yes, at state level
 Yes, at national level
 Yes, at international level
 No

10. How prepared were you for COVID-19 on 31 December 2019?

- Not at all prepared
 Slightly prepared
 Somewhat prepared
 Moderately prepared
 Extremely prepared

11. How prepared are you for COVID-19 today?

- Not at all prepared
 Slightly prepared
 Somewhat prepared
 Moderately prepared
 Extremely prepared

12. How prepared do you think your general practice/healthcare facility is to manage COVID-19 into the future?

- Not at all prepared
 Slightly prepared
 Somewhat prepared
 Moderately prepared
 Extremely prepared

13. How prepared do you think Australia was for COVID-19?

- Not at all prepared
 Slightly prepared
 Somewhat prepared
 Moderately prepared
 Extremely prepared

14. In your opinion, has your general practice/healthcare facility provided clear, timely and authoritative information about COVID-19?

- Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neutral
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

15. In your opinion, has your state or territory government health department provided clear, timely and authoritative information about COVID-19?

- Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neutral
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

16. In your opinion, has the Australian Government Department of Health provided clear, timely and authoritative information about COVID-19?

- Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neutral
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

17. Have you received specific education, training or instruction about COVID-19 within your workplace?

- Yes
 No

17a. What kind of education, training or instruction did you receive? (Please select all that apply)

- In-house practice education
 PHN education / webinar
 RACGP education / webinar
 Other external education / webinar provider

17b. How would you rate the adequacy of this education, training or instruction?

- Not at all adequate
 Slightly adequate
 Somewhat adequate
 Mostly adequate
 Entirely adequate

18. Have you received training or certification in the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for managing COVID-19?

- Yes
 No

18a. How would you rate the adequacy of this training or certification in the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for managing COVID-19?

- Not at all adequate
 Slightly adequate
 Somewhat adequate
 Mostly adequate
 Entirely adequate

19. How confident are you in using personal protective equipment (PPE) for managing COVID-19?

- Not at all confident
 Slightly confident
 Somewhat confident
 Mostly confident
 Entirely confident

20. Does your general practice/healthcare facility have COVID-19 guidelines and an outbreak response plan?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

20a. How familiar are you with your general practice/healthcare facility COVID-19 guidelines and outbreak response plan?

- Not at all familiar
 Slightly familiar
 Somewhat familiar
 Moderately familiar
 Entirely familiar

20b. How easy or difficult is it for you to adhere to your general practice/healthcare facility's guidelines and outbreak response plan for COVID-19?

- Very difficult
 Difficult
 Neutral
 Easy
 Very easy

SECTION 4: EXPERIENCES

In this section we want to hear about your experiences of working in the COVID-19 outbreak.

21. Is your general practice/healthcare facility involved in assessing suspected cases of COVID-19?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

22. Does your general practice/healthcare facility refer suspected or confirmed cases COVID-19 to other facilities?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

23. Is your general practice/healthcare facility involved in treating suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

24. How concerned are you currently about contracting SARS-CoV-2?

- Not at all concerned
 Slightly concerned
 Somewhat concerned
 Moderately concerned
 Extremely concerned

25. Have you taken annual leave because you are, or have been, concerned about contracting SARS-CoV-2 at work?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to say

26. Have you taken sick leave because you are, or have been, concerned about contracting SARS-CoV-2 at work?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to say

27. Have you, or would you, avoid telling others that you have cared for patients with COVID-19 because you are afraid of a negative reaction from them?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know
 Prefer not to say

28. Do you feel that your family or friends have, or are, avoiding contact with you due to the nature of your work?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know
 Prefer not to say

29. Have you experienced or witnessed racial or other forms of discrimination at work associated with the COVID-19 outbreak?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know
 Prefer not to say

30. Has the COVID-19 outbreak increased your workload (i.e. added to your normal, daily duties)?

- No, it has lessened
 No, it has stayed the same
 Slightly more
 Somewhat more
 Moderately more
 Considerably more

31. Do you feel more stressed than usual at work due to the outbreak of COVID-19?

- Not at all
 Slightly
 Somewhat
 Moderately
 Extremely

32. Have you participated in any of the following COVID-19 outbreak response activity? (Please select all that apply)

- Reviewing and updating policies or procedures
- Establishing fever clinics
- Training in donning and doffing PPE
- Supporting healthcare staff
- Supporting other staff
- Planning for surge capacity

33. Does your general practice/healthcare facility provide debriefing or staff psychological support services to you regarding COVID-19?

- Yes, debriefing only
- Yes, staff psychological support only
- Yes, both
- Neither
- Don't know

34. Have you attended debriefings in your general practice/healthcare facility regarding COVID-19, and were they useful?

- No
- Yes, but it was not useful
- Yes, and it was slightly useful
- Yes, and it was moderately useful
- Yes, and it was extremely useful

35. Have you accessed psychological support services in your general practice/healthcare facility regarding COVID-19, and was it useful?

- No
- Yes, but it was not useful
- Yes, and it was slightly useful
- Yes, and it was moderately useful
- Yes, and it was extremely useful

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

36. Do you have any other comments to make about SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19?

If you wish to receive a summary of the survey findings, please provide your email address.
