



Media Release



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New research collaboration will provide the data needed to stop monkeypox in its TraX

Monkeypox (MPX) has emerged as a public health threat internationally, and Australia is at the forefront of responding to the disease through case management, health promotion and vaccination programs. The Kirby Institute is calling for people at risk of MPX to enrol in the TraX study, which will provide the data needed to guide the public health response and help prevent a major outbreak in Australia.

[Wednesday 5 October 2022] The Kirby Institute at UNSW Sydney, in collaboration with national community and government partners, has today launched Australia's largest monkeypox (MPX) study. The study – [TraX](#) – will provide timely information on the MPX vaccine rollout and determine the real-world effectiveness of the vaccine.

Australia began administering MPX vaccines to high-risk populations in August with the expectation of expanding the rollout as more vaccine becomes available. Globally, there is a need to better understand how much the vaccine can reduce the transmission of MPX and whether there are differences in effectiveness using different modes of administration.

“The TraX study will track the vaccine rollout in Australia, collecting information over the next 18 months on the incidence of MPX and the uptake and effectiveness of the vaccine,” says Professor Andrew Grulich, who is leading the research at the Kirby Institute.

“We’re calling on all adults in Australia who are at risk of MPX to enrol. This includes sexually active gay and bisexual men (cis and trans) and anyone who has sex with these men, including women (cis and trans), and non-binary people.”

As of 29 September 2022 there had been 136 cases of MPX notified in Australia, and the Australian Chief Medical Officer has declared MPX to be a Communicable Disease Incident of National Significance. It mostly causes a mild flu-like illness associated with a rash, but in a minority of cases can become serious. Currently, gay and bisexual men account for more than 95% of cases globally.

The TraX study is being conducted in partnership with the NSW Health. Dr Valerie Delpech, Director of the Communicable Diseases Branch at NSW Health and co-chief investigator on the TraX Study says, “The findings will help inform our public health response, including our health promotion activities, to reduce the spread of MPX and its impact on communities in NSW.”



The TraX study will be conducted entirely online. Participants will be required to complete a short 1-minute survey once a week for up to 18 months.

“We know that the community is very concerned about MPX and are eager to do whatever they can to protect themselves and others from the virus,” says Mr Heath Paynter from AFAO. “The more people involved in this study, the greater impact the research will have. With high engagement in the research, we’ll be able to shape the public health response to MPX, not just in Australia, but globally.”

Kirby Institute Patron, The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG, has provided generous support for this research with a major donation. “One of the lessons from the HIV/AIDS epidemic was how critical community knowledge and involvement was in shaping the response and reducing the burden of a public health threat,” he says. “Our recent experience with COVID-19 should teach Australians that international pandemics are always just around the corner. We need to be a step ahead of them. The Kirby Institute plays a leading part in keeping Australia in front of the recurring challenges. In supporting this important research, I encourage anyone who is eligible to participate.”



Find out more and enrol

- Website: traxstudy.org.au
- Facebook: facebook.com/TraXStudy
- Twitter: twitter.com/TraXStudy
- Email: trax@unsw.edu.au

Media contact

Luci Bamford, Media and Communications Manager, Kirby Institute lbamford@kirby.unsw.edu.au
m: 0432 894 029

Kirby Institute

The Kirby Institute is a world-leading health research organisation at UNSW Sydney working to eliminate infectious diseases, globally. We put communities at the heart of our research. That way, we are better able to design tests, treatments and cures that have the greatest chance of success, helping us to eliminate infectious diseases globally.

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