

NTL MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE USE: TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2020

NZ researchers seeking 3,500+ volunteers for world's largest eating disorder genetics investigation

Local researchers are today calling for more than 3,500 New Zealand volunteers aged 16 years and over, with first-hand experience of an eating disorder, to enrol in the world's largest ever genetic investigation into the complex, devastating illnesses.

Their call coincides with [publication of an article in the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners' \(RNZCGP\) GP Pulse](#), outlining the significance of this investigation into the biological components that heighten a person's risk of developing anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder.

Eating disorders are not a choice – they are complex mental illnesses that for some, can lead to severe and permanent physical complications, and even death.¹ Concerningly, eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness.^{1,2,3} While family and twin studies have confirmed that eating disorders run in families, only a handful of the responsible genes have been identified to date, leaving hundreds more to be found.

To hear how cracking the genetic code of eating disorders will improve treatments, and ultimately save lives, tee up an interview with:



EXPERTS	
Prof Cynthia Bulik	Distinguished Professor of Eating Disorders & Founding Director, University of North Carolina Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders & Principal Investigator, Eating Disorders Genetics Initiative (EDGI), NORTH CAROLINA & SWEDEN (VISITING CHRISTCHURCH)
Prof Martin Kennedy	Genetics researcher, University of Otago & Co-lead Investigator, EDGI NZ, CHRISTCHURCH
Dr Jenny Jordan	Senior Lecturer, University of Otago & Co-lead Investigator, EDGI NZ, CHRISTCHURCH
Prof Lois Surgenor	Associate Dean, Health Sciences & Professor in Psychological Medicine, University of Otago, CHRISTCHURCH
Rachel Lawson	Consultant Clinical Psychologist & Clinical Head, South Island Eating Disorders Service, CHRISTCHURCH
Dr Cameron Lacey	Senior Lecturer at the Maori Indigenous Health Institute, Otago University, CHRISTCHURCH
Dr Roger Mysliwiec	Co-founder & Director, New Zealand Eating Disorders Clinic, AUCKLAND
Dr Andrea LaMarre	Researcher & Lecturer in Critical Health Psychology, Massey University, AUCKLAND
Emma Thompson	Team Leader, Central Region Eating Disorder Service, WELLINGTON
Trudy Dent	Clinical Nurse Specialist, Southern Support Eating Disorder (SSED) Service, DUNEDIN
EATING DISORDER ADVOCACY GROUP REPRESENTATIVE	
Genevieve Mora	Eating disorders advocate & Co-founder, Voices of Hope, AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALANDERS WITH EXPERIENCE OF AN EATING DISORDER	
Megan, 23	'Health navigator' who spent eight years battling anorexia nervosa, CHRISTCHURCH
Trudi (Megan's mum)	Mum to Megan, 23, who cared for her daughter while ill with anorexia nervosa, CHRISTCHURCH
Samantha, 22	Café assistant & keen horse rider who spent her teens battling anorexia nervosa, CHRISTCHURCH
Angela, 49	Mother-to-two & writing enthusiast who battled bulimia nervosa for over a decade, AUCKLAND
Caitlin, 30	Operations manager & cooking enthusiast diagnosed with anorexia nervosa in her late twenties, AUCKLAND

Jess, 27	Eating disorders recovery coach whose love of dance fuelled her recovery from anorexia nervosa, AUCKLAND
Claudia, 21	University student, yoga teacher who lost her teenage years to anorexia nervosa, AUCKLAND
Maddie, 24	Youth support worker & nature lover who waged a decade-long battle with anorexia nervosa, with her twin, Libby, AUCKLAND
Libby, 24	Student & personal trainer who spent her childhood & teens wrestling anorexia nervosa alongside her twin, Maddie, WELLINGTON
Claireabelle, 27	Bride to be, nanny & social influencer who has experienced a trifecta of eating disorders, TIMARU
DIGITAL MEDIA KIT + VISION	Digital media kit – www.edgimediakit.co.nz Broadcast vision available for download – www.vimeo.com/vivacomms/edginzvr
INTERVIEWS	Kirsten Bruce & Mel Kheradi VIVA! Communications M 021 279 0816 +61 401 717 566 M +61 421 551 257 E kirstenbruce@vivacomcommunications.com.au; mel@vivacomcommunications.com.au

References

1. National Eating Disorders Collaboration. *What is an eating disorder?*. October 2019]; Available from: <https://www.nedc.com.au/eating-disorders/eating-disorders-explained/something/whats-an-eating-disorder/>.
2. Smink, F.R.E., D. van Hoeken, and H.W. Hoek, *Epidemiology of eating disorders: incidence, prevalence and mortality rates*. *Current psychiatry reports*, 2012. 14(4): p. 406-414.
3. Fichter, M. and N. Quadflieg, *Mortality in eating disorders - Results of a large prospective clinical longitudinal study*. *The International journal of eating disorders*, 2016. 49.