



## Walking with the low back pain patient: A patient journey approach

– October 2024

### FACTS:

- In 2020, 619 million people around the world had lower back pain.
- The cost of managing back pain in Australia amounts to \$4.8 billion annually.
- Between 2015-2018, there were 14,608 hospitalisations for lumbar spinal fusion in Australia.
- Out of 195,000 patients across seven countries, less than half received appropriate medications for LBP.

### BACKGROUND:

- Low back pain (LBP) is a widespread condition causing significant disability and impacting daily functioning for hundreds of millions of individuals globally.
- Despite numerous guidelines, there are substantial inconsistencies in LBP care, including overuse of surgical interventions and inappropriate medication management.
- The growing prevalence of LBP presents substantial socioeconomic challenges, necessitating a comprehensive understanding of patient experiences and care pathways.

### AIM:

- To explore the experiences of LBP patients through their journey of engaging with the healthcare system.
- To identify key areas for improvement and design opportunities for future healthcare optimisation from a patient's perspective.

### METHODS:

- The program will utilise focus groups and interviews to explore the journeys and experiences of participants with LBP.
- A process and journey map will be developed based on a framework analysis of the interviews.

### PROJECT CYCLE:

2024–2025

### PARTNERS:

*The George Institute for Global Health, Australia*

*UNSW Sydney, Australia*

*University of Sydney, Australia*

### SUPPORTERS:

*The George Institute for Global Health, Australia*

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

*Professor Manuela Ferreira*

### IMPACT

- The visual representation will highlight challenges and opportunities for optimisation of the healthcare pathway for LBP patients.
- Ultimately, this study will serve as a foundation for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of care, aligning the system with a more patient-driven approach.

### CONTACT:

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