

Depression study seeks Geelong participants

20May08

MONASH University is seeking Geelong region residents to help it in a study into depression.

The university needs people aged between 18 and 75 to take part in its Depression Awareness Recovery Effectiveness project, based at The Geelong Clinic in St Albans Park.

The participants must have experienced at least three episodes of depression in their life, but now be well enough to join their study.

Project investigator Michael Berk, a Professor of Psychiatry at Barwon Health, said those involved in the study would be asked to complete research assessments about once every three months for the next two years via the internet or post.

They will also be interviewed in person twice annually.

Prof Berk said major depressive disorder was one of the most common forms of illness in Australia, affecting 5.1 per cent of Australians each year.

Studies have shown that most people who suffer one episode of depression will have a relapse, and Prof Berk said his study was aimed at helping those people avoid further episodes.

"Unfortunately, major depressive disorder is a condition that tends to recur," he said.

"This strong pattern of recurrence in major depressive disorder is why it is so important that researchers be investigating new ways of preventing future episodes of depression."

The Monash University study will examine a variety of approaches to treating depression.



RESEARCH: Professor Michael Berk is studying depression.

Anyone interested in participating in the DARE study should visit the website www.dare.org.au phone Debbie Lang on 9554 1585, or e-mail dare@med.monash.edu.au