

The EXAMINER

[News](#)

[News](#)

- [Local News](#)
- [Court and Crime](#)
- [Property](#)
- [History](#)
- [Rural](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Investigations](#)
- [Forgotten River](#)
- [National](#)
- [World](#)
- [Listen](#)

[Sport](#)

- [Local Sport](#)
- [Junior Sport](#)
- [Scores and Draws](#)
- [Football](#)
- [Soccer](#)
- [Basketball](#)
- [Cricket](#)
- [Cycling](#)
- [Netball](#)
- [Racing](#)
- [National Sport](#)

[What's On](#)

- [Things to do](#)
- [Food and Drink](#)
- [Family and Kids](#)
- [Theatre and Arts](#)
- [Music and Gigs](#)
- [TV Guide](#)

[Today's Paper](#)

[Video](#)

[Real Estate View](#)

[Community](#)

- [Babies, Weddings & Obituaries](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Send Us Your News](#)
- [Photo Sales](#)
- [Sponsorships](#)

[Comment](#)

- [Your Say](#)
- [Our Say](#)
- [Opinion](#)

[Jobs](#)

[Classifieds](#)

- [Tributes](#)
- [Celebrations](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Place a Job Ad](#)
- [Place a Classifieds Ad](#)
- [Ag and Rural](#)
- [Garage Sales](#)

SUBSCR

- [Special Publications](#)
- [Partner Content](#)

[Life & Style](#)

- [Life](#)
- [Competitions](#)
- [Explore Travel](#)
- [Puzzles](#)
- [Celebrity](#)
- [Shopping](#)

[Discount Codes](#)

Search Site

- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Sport](#)
- [What's On](#)
- [Today's Paper](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Real Estate View](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Comment](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [Recommended](#)
- [Life & Style](#)
- [Discount Codes](#)
- [All](#)

NewsLocal News

- Local News
- Court and Crime
- Property
- History
- Rural
- Politics
- Health
- Business
- Education
- Investigations
- Forgotten River
- National
- World
- Listen

1. [Home](#)
2. [News](#)
3. [Local News](#)

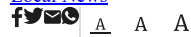
March 12 2022 - 3:30PM

Tasmanian ketamine study to treat chronic pain patients




[Andrew Chounding](#)

[Local News](#)





 Professor Luke Johnson will study the effects of ketamine on pain treatment experience and patient perceptions. Picture: Rob Burnett

New research underway by academics in Northern Tasmania is looking to improve treatments for people with chronic pain using ketamine.

Running the study is University of Tasmania Associate Professor of Psychology Luke Johnson who explained the project was about improving treatment outcomes for patients with chronic pain in Northern Tasmania and the Launceston General Hospital.

READ MORE: [Premier opens up about his own experience of child sexual abuse](#)

"Ketamine is a drug that's been established for the past 50 years," he said.

"It's been in medicine for 50 years where it's used for two purposes. The first purpose it's used for is anaesthesia, and it's an effective anaesthetic agent, but it's also used for pain, both acute and chronic pain.

"If people are experiencing various types of pain, ketamine is a quick way to treat them.

READ MORE: [Modern library hub just the beginning for UTAS at Inveresk](#)

"An acute pain, like a burn or something like that, you could treat quickly to give relief to a patient with ketamine but for chronic pain, it's more of a challenging thing to tackle."

Professor Johnson said while ketamine was under investigation around the world for its mental health applications, the Tasmanian study was unique for its consideration of chronic pain applications.

"What we're doing that's unique here at the LGH is we're combining that study in chronic pain patients," he said.

"About 60 per cent of those chronic pain patients are likely to have a co-morbidity or experience depression or anxiety.

"Therefore, our hypothesis is that ketamine will have that dual beneficial effect on both pain outcomes and on mental health outcomes.

"We think because ketamine has a role in affecting neurotransmitters in the brain, it's likely to have a beneficial role in modifying that plasticity in the brain that can provide relief for chronic pain."

Professor Johnson said the study had received an \$80,000 grant from Launceston medical researcher, the Clifford Craig Foundation, which would be used to establish baseline data.

"This grant from the foundation, from Clifford Craig, is really helpful and really instrumental in obtaining critical pilot data, enabling us to expand the studies into larger clinical trials," he said.

"We're framing this initial study as a pilot study where we'll study 30 people.

READ MORE: [Launceston teen writes to International Criminal Court](#)

"Those people will come in for a one week-long treatment, so in a way that's 30 weeks of treatment, and then we'll be studying each of those people for six months each."

Longer-term, Professor Johnson said the goal was to increase the size of the study and move to clinical trials, but explained this was dependent on the pilot data and further funding.


"Our goal, once we have obtained this initial pilot data from these 30 patients at the Launceston General Hospital, is to increase the study and to get funding for a larger randomised control trial, which involves a much bigger undertaking and involves more patients - there's a lot more cost associated with it," he said.

"A clinical trial typically costs many millions of dollars, so that's what our goal is, to obtain that data and then increase the size of the study."


What do you think? Send us a letter to the editor:

Our journalists work hard to provide local, up-to-date news to the community. This is how you can continue to access our trusted content:

- Bookmark www.examiner.com.au
- Make sure you are signed up for our breaking and regular headlines [newsletters](#)
- Follow us on Twitter: [@examineronline](#)
- Follow us on Instagram: [@examineronline](#)
- Follow us on Google News: [The Examiner](#)



Find something different
Visit Gunners Arms Liquor Stax for a huge selection of wine.
[Find out More](#)



Hymark, not the Lowmark
Furniture suited to a variety of interior design styles.
[Find out More](#)



We generate
J.A. Du Toit
[0363](#)

view INSURANCE Need Insurance for your business?
[Contact View Insurance today →](#)

Sign up to receive our Breaking News Alerts and Editor's Daily Headlines featuring the best local news and stories.

Enter your email

SIGN UP

[Privacy Policy](#) [Terms and Conditions](#)

Local News

1. [Islamic community celebrates opening of Northern Tasmania's first mosque](#)
2. [Tasmanian pork-barreling accusations denied by Labor](#)
3. [Wildlife volunteer calling for speed limit reduction](#)
4. [New Omnicron variant expected to drive up daily numbers over coming week](#)
5. [Balfour Burn participant gearing up for 2022 event](#)
6. [90 years of Miss Flinders celebrated at Launceston Airport](#)

• • • •

- [Subscribe](#)

Australian Community Media

The Examiner

Our Sites

Submit