Study Title: Q-Fever in Ireland: Characterising Zoonotic Risk

About the Study

This study is the first of its kind in Ireland to assess the risk that **Q fever**, a disease transmitted from animals to humans, poses to people living or working near livestock. Q fever is caused by the bacteria *Coxiella burnetii*, which is found in farm animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats.

Although often mild or without symptoms, Q fever can lead to serious illness in some individuals, especially those with certain health conditions. Past studies show that the infection is present in Irish livestock, but we don't yet have a clear understanding of how many people in Ireland have been exposed — or which populations are most at risk.

Purpose

The main goal of this research is to characterize the risk posed to the Irish human population by the prevalence, density, and proximity of livestock populations regarding Q fever.

- Testing for antibodies Q fever (a sign of past infection) in blood samples from adult volunteers.
- Compare people who work with animals (like farmers or vets) with people who don't, to see if there's a difference in exposure.
- Look at other factors — like age, sex, and where someone lives — to see if they affect someone's chances of being exposed to Q fever.
- Create a map of Q fever risk areas in Ireland by combining data from farms with information from people's blood tests. This will help show which places or groups of people might be more at risk.

Why This Matters

With a large portion of Ireland's population living or working near livestock, understanding the risks of zoonotic diseases — diseases that spread from animals to humans — is increasingly important. This study supports Ireland's commitment to a **One Health** approach that recognises the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.

What Participation Involves

If you choose to take part:

- You will be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your job, location, and any contact with farm animals.
- A trained medical professional will collect a small blood sample (approx. 5mL) from you in a mobile clinic.
- Your sample will be tested for Q fever antibodies, which indicate whether you've been exposed to the infection in the past.

- If you are interested, you can opt-in to receive your test results.

Research Team and Ethics

The study is led by researchers at University College Dublin Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis. It has received ethical approval and follows strict clinical and data protection standards.

Download the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL)

This leaflet includes detailed information about what participation involves, your rights, how your data will be used, and who to contact with questions.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or would like more information, please get in touch:

Dr Katie Corridan
Email: [katie.corridan@ucd.ie]
Phone: [0858007779]
Institution: University College Dublin Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis