

CARE IN FUNERALS PROJECT
Participant Information
for
Bereaved Families and Friends

Please accept our condolences on your bereavement.

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research project. This participant information sheet provides all the information you'll need about what taking part in this research project would involve. The information provided here is the same as that found on our Participant Information web pages. Please save or print a copy for your records.

Can I help?

To ensure that the research is as useful as possible, we need to hear about the diverse experiences and views of people from across the UK. This includes people of different faiths and none, and people from different cultural backgrounds.

We would like to speak to families and friends of people who have died during the pandemic – whether because of COVID-19 or another cause.

We will be careful to ensure that our sample of participants is as broadly inclusive as possible.

What does taking part involve?

A researcher from the University of Aberdeen will interview you about your experiences and your thoughts about funerals during COVID-19. This conversation would take place at a convenient time for you, either by online video calling or by telephone.

Your interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed so that the research team can review it carefully. We will learn from all the interviews and share this learning in publications and presentations, and in the information resource that we develop. We will do this in a way which ensures your anonymity.

We will also invite you to share with us, if you would like to, items from or about the funeral(s) you have been involved in. These might be orders of service, videos or slide-shows from a funeral or memorial, pictures or tributes or gravestones, or obituary notices. This is entirely voluntary, and we recognise that you may need to ask others before you decide whether to share something. Any items you share with us will be stored securely and what we learn from them will be reported anonymously.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you whether or not you volunteer. If you do agree to take part and then change your mind, you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Are there any risks?

Talking about death and funerals, especially funerals for people you were close to and funerals that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, is likely to be emotional and may be distressing. The research team understand this and will be supportive. If you feel upset during the interview, we can pause the conversation, take a break or stop altogether, depending on your wishes.

There will be no direct benefit to you if you do take part in this study, but you will be helping with efforts to make funerals better for others in the future.

What happens next?

If you would like to take part, please complete the response form here - [Care in Funerals Response Form](#) – or download it from [our project webpages](#) and email the completed form to us at careinfunerals@abdn.ac.uk. A team member will be in touch, and if we both agree to go ahead with an interview, we will send you a consent form to read through. We will record your verbal consent via telephone/video call before the interview starts.

Data and Sharing

This study has been approved by the University of Aberdeen Arts, Social Sciences and Business Research Ethics Committee.

Your name and contact details will be used by the research team to arrange an interview, to thank you afterwards, to communicate about any items you decide to share with us and (if you agree) to let you know about the research findings when they are available.

Your interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed by an accredited company external to the University of Aberdeen. Your interview data, and any items you share with us, will be stored securely on a university computer with restricted access.

We will report the study findings in a way that ensures your anonymity. We will label your interview data and any items you share with us with a code number. When we talk or write about our findings from the research interviews, we will present any examples in a way that no one can work out which particular funeral is being talked about or that it was you who told us about your experiences. (We will omit or change little details and use the code number or fictitious names to label examples).

Your information may also be seen by university governance staff who work to make sure that the research is being done properly. We will keep all information about you safe and secure.

Once we have finished the study, if you give us extra permission (see below), we will share the anonymized interview transcripts with an academic archive so it can be used for further research if relevant.

You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep any anonymized information from the transcript of your interview.

We will ask you if you are willing for an anonymized copy of your interview transcript to be added to a data archive that can be used by other researchers in the future. This is an extra permission, and you can take part in our study without agreeing to your anonymized interview transcript being passed on to the data archive.

We would like to let you know how our research is going, and where you can find the resources we develop. If you agree, we will send you an email when the resource becomes available on our project website, and also if there are events to discuss our findings.

You can find out more about how we use your information by asking one of the research team via careinfunerals@abdn.ac.uk, or by contacting the university's Data Protection Officer via dpa@abdn.ac.uk or 01224 272596.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your queries. Please email careinfunerals@abdn.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy and wish to speak to someone else or complain formally, you can do this by contacting Research Governance at the University of Aberdeen – researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk