

**Study title: Maternal drinking behaviour – Focus groups**

**Participant Information Sheet**

You are being invited to participate in a research focus group. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand (abirose@liv.ac.uk). Please also feel free to discuss this with your friends, relatives and GP if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

**Thank you for reading this.**

**1)**   **What is the purpose of the study?**

a) To identify people's views on drinking alcohol during pregnancy and early motherhood

b) To identify why women do and do not drink alcohol during pregnancy and early motherhood

c) To identify barriers to reducing alcohol consumption during pregnancy and early motherhood

d) To determine what women want from health interventions aimed at reducing alcohol use during pregnancy and early motherhood

**2)**  **Why have I been chosen to take part?**

We are recruiting volunteers who fall within several population categories: women who are pregnant, women who have children 5 years and under, midwives, obstetric clinicians, alcohol service clinicians, GPs, and health visitors.

Within these populations, we are looking for participants who are:

a) aged 18 years of over

b) fluent English speakers

If you meet the above criteria, then you are eligible to take part.

**3)**  **Do I have to take part?**

No. Participation in this research is completely voluntary. While you are taking part in the focus group you are free to take a break and/or withdraw at any point.

**4)** **What will happen if I take part?**

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to attend one focus group which will last approximately 60-90 minutes. The focus group will include an introduction by the research chief investigator (Dr Abi Rose). Then, the first half of the focus group will be a discussion covering key topics, e.g. drinking during pregnancy/early motherhood, reasons women do and do not drink during these periods, barriers to reducing drinking, knowledge and/or understanding of the effects of drinking alcohol during these periods. The second half of the focus group will discuss experiences with health interventions (e.g. health apps), and provide demonstrations of current pregnancy and behaviour change support website and apps. You will be invited to have a go with the apps, and comment on aspects that you like/dislike.

You do not need to contribute to any of the focus groups discussion topics or activities.

**5)** **Are there any risks in taking part?**

We aim to offer a supportive and non-judgemental environment, however, given the topic of the focus groups (maternal drinking), some participants may feel uncomfortable or upset.

If you feel unduly upset during the focus group, you can stop and take a break or leave the group. One of the facilitators will stay with you. If there’s a topic/activity you do not want to contribute to, you can choose not to.

To ensure we accurately record the data, focus groups will be audio recorded. Once the focus group has finished, the data from the audio file will be transcribed and checked for accuracy. Recordings will then be immediately destroyed. If you decide you do not want your data to be used, you can request it be destroyed. If we have not yet transcribed the data and deleted the material we will destroy your data. However, after this time we will not be able to identify which data is yours and so it cannot be destroyed.

**6)** **Are there any benefits in taking part?**

There are no direct benefits from taking part. However, we hope that the data will help develop our understanding of maternal drinking and well-being. This will inform interventions and treatment aimed at reducing maternal drinking which we hope will improve maternal health and well-being. In the future we also want this research to inform work looking at improving children's lives.

Given that we will need you to attend focus groups at the University of Liverpool, we will cover transport costs and light refreshments during the focus group.

**7)** **What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?**

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting Dr Abi Rose (0151 794 1159) and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Governance Officer on 0151 794 8290 (ethics@liv.ac.uk). When contacting the Research Governance Officer, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the Principle Investigator (Dr Abi Rose), and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

**8)** **Will my participation be kept confidential, and what happens to my data?**

Yes.

You will be assigned a random ‘participant number’, and none of your personal details will be kept with your data. Data will be stored on secure, password-protected drives. If this research is disseminated (e.g. as a journal article or through a conference presentation), datasets may be submitted at the same time. However, all data sets are completely anonymous. Your data cannot be traced back to you.

We will video record the focus groups so that we can ensure that what is said is associated with the right person. Once this data has been checked for accuracy by the research team, the video files will be destroyed in line with University policy on the destruction of sensitive data.

If you are interested in the results of the study, please let us know and we will send you a summary of the research once it is completed.

**9)** **What will happen if I want to stop taking part?**

You are under no obligation to take part in this study; it is completely your choice. If you do decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any point during the focus group without giving any reason or explanation.

**10)** **Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

Please contact the Principle Investigator:

Dr Abi Rose (abirose@liverpool.ac.uk / 0151 794 1159)

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