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**FULL/LONG TITLE OF THE STUDY**

Emergent everyday ethics in infrastructures for smart care: phase 1 (researchers and developers)

**SHORT STUDY TITLE / ACRONYM**

Everyday ethics of smart care: perspectives of researchers and developers

**PROTOCOL VERSION NUMBER AND DATE 2.0 2/2/2021**

Confidentiality Statement

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**STUDY SUMMARY (Optional)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Study Title | Emergent everyday ethics in infrastructures for smart care: phase 1 (researchers and developers) |
| Internal ref. no. (or short title) | Everyday ethics of smart care: perspectives of researchers and developers |
| Planned Size of Sample (if applicable) | 15 |
| Planned Study Period | 1 October 2020 – 30 September 2022 |

**FUNDING AND SUPPORT IN KIND (Optional)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **FUNDER(S)**  (Names and contact details of ALL organisations providing funding and/or support in kind for this study) | **FINANCIAL AND NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT GIVEN** |
| APEX scheme <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/apex-awards/>  Jointly awarded by Royal Society, British Academy and Royal Academy of Engineering | £64,268.00 for research expenses and replacement teaching costs |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**INVESTIGATORS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME** | **Position** | **Signature (optional)** |
| Christine Hine | Professor of Sociology, University of Surrey |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**STUDY PROTOCOL**

### Abstract

New smart technologies offer great promise to improve care for people living with long-term conditions such as dementia and to enable them to live in their own homes for longer. Engineers work with healthcare professionals, patients and carers to develop technologies to monitor wellbeing and support people to live well at home. Significant ethical challenges arise, however, as decisions are made about what features the technology should contain, who has access to data collected by monitoring devices and what actions should be taken in response. Smart technologies can take decisions on our behalf, and sometimes this can be troubling. In this project, a social scientist is working with an expert in machine learning and Internet of Things who is developing smart technologies for care settings. Together they will explore how ethical challenges arise and are managed in everyday practice. The research will entail the social scientist interviewing engineers, healthcare professionals, carers and people living with dementia who are involved in development of smart technologies for care settings. The aim of these interviews is to identify from each participants’ perspective when and how they become aware of ethical challenges, how they distinguish the ethical challenges from other kinds of issue such as a technical hitch or a misunderstanding, and how they deal with the various kinds of issue to negotiate acceptable outcomes. As a result we will learn more about whether ethical issues can be anticipated in advance and develop ways to build ethical decision-making into the lifespan of a project. The current application for ethical review relates only to the first phase of the research involving interviews with researchers and developers working in a university, non-profit or commercial setting. Further applications for ethical review will seek HRA approval for interviews with clinicians, healthcare professionals, carers and people living with dementia.

### Background or rationale of the project

In recent years there has been an explosion in discussion around the ethics of data-driven technologies such as the artificial intelligence underpinning “smart” forms of decision-making (Floridi and Cowls, 2019). While concerns about possible ethical challenges raised by artificial intelligence have been live since the emergence of the field itself, the debate has become significantly more active in recent years with the increasing mainstreaming of these technologies. Increases in both computing power and the availability of wireless connections and the raw data to fuel machine learning have fostered a flourishing domain of research and commercial application and along with this, a flourishing domain of commentary and concern about potential undesirable consequences such as breaches of privacy, loss of autonomy and lack of human oversight. In order to alleviate such prospects, a need to articulate standards for the field and set boundaries for acceptable practice has been proposed repeatedly, and indeed Floridi and Cowls (2019) describe a “principle proliferation” occurring, as multiple authors and institutions seek to identify the ethical principles that should prevail. Floridi and Cowls (2019) identify five over-arching ethical principles that arise repeatedly or subsume more granular principles: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, justice and explicability. In short, it appears that there is considerable consensus that we want data-driven technologies to work for good and not to do harm, that they should enshrine human autonomy and not machine autonomy, that they operate in the interests of justice rather than discrimination and that all of the principles are achieved through technologies that are open to interrogation because they are intelligible and can be held to account. While there might be some convergence in terms of over-arching principles, there is as yet little progress towards consensus on how the principles are to be enshrined in practice (Morley et al, 2019). In relation to artificial intelligence in healthcare Nebeker et al (2019) argue that we are still some distance from an “actionable ethics” in this field and that we need interdisciplinary research to “improve meaningful connections between [the] groups that are integral to digital health research and the use of AI in the health care sector” (p4). There is considerable potential for clinicians, engineers, scientists, patients and carers to take different perspectives and to disagree among themselves. Ethical traditions differ between disciplines, as do mechanisms for establishing the nature and governance of ethical issues. We have established modes of ethical review in both medical and university settings but it is not clear that anticipatory governance aiming to identify and mitigate ethical challenges in advance is feasible for the complexities of artificial intelligence (Hine, 2019). For this reason the proposed research will explore ethical challenges as they arise for the diverse participants in smart care initiatives in the course of everyday practice.

The approach to ethics taken here is in dialogue with over-arching ethical principles but begins from a more everyday understanding of ethical issues as emergent through practice in context – the focus is therefore on understanding how diverse participants recognize and manage issues that count to them as “ethically important moments” (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004) and how participants separate out and manage issues identified in this way differently as compared to those labelled as technical problems, misunderstandings or disagreements. According to the perspectives on infrastructure developed in Science and Technology Studies (Bowker at al, 2009), in the building of an infrastructure participants are building in social, political and ethical choices and facing continual challenges in aligning different sets of values. The proposed research brings a sociological perspective on everyday ethics and infrastructural work to the challenges of engineering appropriate solutions in the domain of smart technologies. The context of dementia care in the home is a particularly potent site for the research, involving multiple disciplines and perspectives and developing pioneering approaches at the forefront of capabilities in smart technologies for care settings.

Payam Barnaghi, as co-investigator on the research grant that funds this research, is responsible for introducing Christine Hine to the work of his research group and supporting her to acquire domain knowledge through guided reading, workshops and team meetings and attendance at key conferences in the field. He will not be conducting the primary research nor accessing raw data. This primary research will involve Christine Hine conducting a series of interviews with participants in initiatives focused on developing smart care infrastructures, including researchers, technicians, clinicians, carers and people living with dementia (where they have the capacity to participate and to consent). Recruitment will initially be facilitated by introductions from the co-applicant to initiatives including the UK Dementia Research Institute’s Care Research and Technology Centre and the Technology Integrated Health Management Internet of Things Testbed for Dementia Care (TIHM) and snowball beyond to additional initiatives as necessary to reach a diverse sample of participants in varied roles. Each interviewee will be invited to take part in three interviews, one lengthy introductory interview and two shorter follow-ups, allowing for an appreciation of the emergence of ethical issues across the life span of initiatives. Interviews will be semi- structured and focus on exploring with participants their developing perceptions of the ethical dimensions of the initiatives they are involved in from their own and others’ perspectives and exploring with them the role of their prior knowledge and professional or personal background. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo to code emergent themes in answer to the research questions and to explore the different perceptions of participants. Interviewees will be invited to take part in four focus groups in the final six months of the project during which they will discuss the predictability or otherwise of ethical concerns in this domain and explore suitable support mechanisms to facilitate better management of these issues. The content of these focus groups will be the subject of a new application for ethical review nearer the time: the current application for ethical review includes consent processes for interviewees to be recontacted to invited them to focus groups.

***References***

Bowker, G. C., Baker, K., Millerand, F., & Ribes, D. (2009). Toward information infrastructure studies: Ways of knowing in a networked environment. In *International Handbook of Internet Research* (pp. 97-117). Springer, Dordrecht.

Floridi, L., & Cowls, J. (2019). A unified framework of five principles for AI in society. *Harvard Data Science Review, 1(1)* https://doi.org/10.1162/99608f92.8cd550d1

Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and “ethically important moments” in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(2), 261-280.

Hine, C. (2019b) Humans or data? University-based ethical governance and data-driven innovation. Paper presented at AsSIST-UK Annual Conference, Manchester, September 9-10.

Morley, J., Floridi, L., Kinsey, L., & Elhalal, A. (2019). From what to how. An overview of AI ethics tools, methods and research to translate principles into practices. arXiv preprint arXiv:1905.06876

1. **Patient/Participant involvement**

Payam Barnaghi has advised on research design, as a leading member of the target group of researcher and developer participants.

### Aims and objectives

The overarching objective of the research is to identify when and how ethical concerns become apparent to participants within innovative initiatives in smart care, and to work collaboratively with participants to identify mechanisms to address these ethical concerns more effectively. This objective is met through exploring a set of research questions:

* • At what points in the design and implementation process of a smart care infrastructure are ethical issues or dilemmas identified and by whom?
* • How are ethical issues and dilemmas practically and morally distinguished from “business as usual” and from other hitches, such as technical failures, misunderstandings or disagreements?
* • What formal and informal mechanisms are deployed to deal with the issues identified as having ethical connotations?
* • How do participants experience the process of dealing with ethical issues and dilemmas? What forms of authority do they recognize? What ethical principles and forms of governance do they refer to? Are they satisfied with the outcomes? Does past experiences inform their future practice?
* • To what extent is it possible to anticipate and design out ethical issues and dilemmas? What mechanisms would help these issues to be addressed throughout the design and implementation process, to the satisfaction of participants?

### Benefits of the study

There is no direct benefit to participants, beyond the opportunity to reflect on ethical aspects of their practice in a non-judgmental and supportive environment. The research may lead to enhanced support for participants in smart care innovations in future to help them to anticipate and handle ethical issues as they arise.

1. **Recruitment Methods**

The eligibility criteria are that the participant should be a researcher or developer working in the field of smart care for domestic settings and should be employed in a university, non-profit (e.g. dementia charity) or commercial setting. Some participants may have dual appointments with both university and a healthcare trust but no participants solely employed by a healthcare trust will be involved in this phase of the research.

Potential participants will be approached via two routes:

1. Introduction by Prof Payam Barnaghi. Prof Barnaghi will send the invitation email (Appendix 1) to members of his research group and collaborators to invite them to consider participation. See Appendix 2 for confirmation of this agreement from Prof Barnaghi. Christine will also give a short presentation at a team meeting of the UK Dementia Research Institute Care and Technology Centre, followed up by an email to the team to confirm the details and one follow-up reminder email (Appendix 3)
2. Direct approach by Christine Hine. Christine will send the invitation email (Appendix 4) to potential participants identified through search of publicly available information such as company, charity and university websites. This will extend the scope of recruitment beyond UK Dementia Research Institute.

“Snowball” recruitment is also possible, if an interviewee or other contact offers to pass the details of the research on to their own contacts who may be interested and eligible to participate. In this instance they will be encouraged to use the same wording as used in the email from Prof Barnaghi (Appendix 1) and it will be made clear that potential interviewees will need to make contact on their own initiative rather than their details being shared with Christine Hine.

The priority in recruitment will be to include interviewees from a diverse set of institutional settings, career stages and professional backgrounds. All potential participants who express an interest in the research will be sent the information sheet and consent form with a covering email (Appendix 5). Recruitment will stop once 15 potential participants have been recruited, and any who make approaches after that will be thanked for their interest and informed that recruitment has closed.

### Informed Consent and Withdrawal of Consent

On expressing initial interest, potential participants will be sent the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 6) and consent form (Appendix 7) with covering email (Appendix 5). The PIS assures recipients that they are under no obligation to participate and explains the research process. Participants will be able to withdraw from the research at any point and will be able to withdraw their data up to one month after completion of their final interview. Following this point their data will have been included in the thematic analysis and it will not be possible to withdraw.

### Experimental design, data collection and methods (including data analysis)

Following return of a completed consent form arrangements will be made for a mutually convenient time to conduct an interview via Microsoft Teams. It is anticipated that this will be a comfortable and familiar environment for the majority of participants working in university or commercial settings. The interview will last for approximately one hour, following the interview guide in Appendix 8. Interviews are semi-structured – the questions listed here express the scope and sequence of the interview conversation and are not necessarily to be delivered verbatim as the goal is to maintain a conversation that responds to the interviewee’s contributions and flows as naturally as possible. Material in italics covers potential prompts to encourage detail in the interviewee’s responses.

Following an initial long interview, participants will be invited to take part in two further follow-up interviews each lasting approximately 15 minutes. The scope of these interviews is outlined in Appendix 8. The aim of the follow-up is to capture changing experiences across the lifespan of a project and to allow for the interviewee to reflect on and respond to the interviewer’s agenda. The initial consent process covers consent for the repeat contact, but at each stage continued consent will be checked and participants will be free to withdraw at any time.

### Risk Assessment

| 1. **Identified Risks** | 1. **Likelihood** | 1. **Potential Impact/**   **Outcome** | 1. **Potential Severity of Outcome** | 1. **Risk Management/Mitigating Factors** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Identify risks/hazards present* | *Identify how likely the event is i.e.*  *Very likely/ Likely/ Possible/ Unlikely* | *Who might be harmed and how?*  *Ensure you have considered the research team, participants and anyone not directly involved in the research.* | *Classify the severity of outcomes identified in 3.*  *i.e. High/ Medium/ Low* | *Evaluate the risks and decide on the precautions.* | *Standard Operating Procedures\*/ risk assessments*  *Enter Ref no/ title/ expiry date* |
| Disclosure of  information that  might need reporting to authorities such as research misconduct accusations | Unlikely | Researcher compromised by complicity with misconduct.  Institutional damage through misconduct. | High | Interviewees will be aware that they are speaking on the record and hence very unlikely to raise issues relating to their own misconduct.  If such issues were to arise as an accusation about others, the researcher will direct the interviewee towards the relevant misconduct process but not raise the complaint on their behalf. |  |
| Risk of data loss | Unlikely | Participant time wasted.  Scope of research reduced by loss of participant data | Medium | * Interviews will be recorded on encrypted audio device and backed up to secure servers as soon as possible * Anonymised transcripts will be stored in a secure location on University servers where automatic backups take place. |  |
| Risk of breaching participant confidentiality | Possible | Embarrassment and reputational risk to interviewee |  | * Interviews will be recorded on encrypted audio device and not recorded on the Microsoft Teams servers * Recordings will be securely stored until transcription and then destroyed * Transcription will be carried out by professional transcribers using secure upload/download * Pseudonyms and generic job titles will be agreed with participants to provide some confidentiality * Participants will be made aware that unique details may render them identifiable. * Recruitment will be extended beyond UK Dementia Research Institute to reduce the potential for identifiability within a narrow participant pool. |  |
| Participants may feel under obligation to participate | Possible | Feelings of coercion to participate, leading to participant distress and compromising data quality | Medium | * Assure all participants of no obligation to participate. * Only Christine Hine to have access to list of participants |  |

### Data Management

*1. Personal and special category data*

The research will make use of personal data for the recruitment process. The personal data will include names of participants and their email addresses. No special category data will be collected.

*2. Uses of personal and special category data*

Personal data will be used to keep a record of participants and to contact them to arrange the initial interview and to re-contact participants to invite them to follow-up interviews and focus groups if they consent to use of their data in this way.

*3. Explaining to participants how their data will be used*

Participants will be informed about how their data will be used through the participant information sheet and consent form. When potential participants express their interest in the research, they will be sent the information sheet and consent form. If they do decide to take part they will sign (by typing their name) onto the electronic consent form and initialling the relevant boxes to signal consent for the various components of the research.

*4. Access to personal and special category data*

Only Christine Hine will have access to the personal data described above.

*5. Anonymity and confidentiality*

Personal data used for tracking recruitment (participant names and contact details linked with their pseudonym) will be stored in a password-protected spreadsheet on secure University of Surrey file storage. Transcripts will be anonymised by using pseudonyms and job titles agreed with the participant and by removing any identifiable data, including names, institutions or project titles. These will be stored separately to the recruitment documents. When an interviewee signals their consent to be re-contacted for a follow-up interview, the researcher will generate a calendar reminder to send that interviewee a reminder on the required date. This invitation will use the interviewee’s pseudonym. When the reminder appears the researcher will check the contact details for that pseudonym in the password protected spreadsheet and send an email to that interviewee.

Audio-recordings will be deleted once the transcripts have been checked. Audio-recordings will not be shared with anyone other than Christine Hine and professional transcribers. Audio-recordings will be transferred to transcribers via secure upload.

Audio-recordings and transcripts will be named using a convention based on the pseudonym and the date of the interview – allowing for transcripts relating to the same interviewee to be connected and placed in order for analysis without recourse to personal data.

*6. Withdrawal of data*

As stated on the participant information sheet, participants will be able to withdraw their data from the study at any point until one month from the date of the final interview. This time limit is clearly stated on the participant information sheet and consent form. If a participant decides to withdraw their data, all data relating to them will be deleted.

*8. Secure storage of personal and special category data*

Signed consent forms and interview audio recordings will be stored in password-protected files on secure University of Surrey file storage to which only Christine Hine has access.

Audio recordings will be transcribed by a professional transcription service who offer a secure file upload download facility and assurance of confidentiality (Appendix 9).

*9. Use of project and research data after completion of project*

Personal data used for conducting recruitment will be deleted on completion of the project as will emails relating to arrangement of interviews. Signed consent forms will be retained for 6 years after completion of the project. Audio-recordings will be deleted after the transcript has been completed and checked. Pseudonymised transcripts may be retained for use in preparation of further academic publications and offered for archiving by the UK Data Archive. Participants will be made aware of this in the participant information sheet and offered the opportunity to signal their consent on the consent form.

*10. Actions in case of a data breach*

A data breach would have occurred if someone other than Christine Hine have gained or could have gained access to personal data collected in the research. Every precaution to ensure a data breach does not occur will be taken, however, if it does, guidance given by the University’s Information Compliance Unit will be followed. This will involve contacting the Information Compliance Unit immediately after it becomes apparent that there has been a breach of security or that personal data has been accessed or shared with unauthorised parties.

### Ethical considerations

The key ethical issues raised by this research focus on working relations and the potential for participants to feel either pressured to participate by virtue of their working relationships or concerned about the management of their reputation when discussing ethical challenges.

While all efforts will be made to ensure confidentiality by agreeing pseudonyms and suitably generic job titles for labelling interview data, complete anonymity cannot be assured because unique combinations of experience and details discussed in interviews may be sufficient uniquely to identify a participant to others involved in their area of work. Interviewees are warned in the Participant Information Sheet that this is the case. Similarly, participants are warned not to share commercially sensitive information. While there is an inevitable loss in the depth and detail of the data when participants are aware that they are speaking to some extent on the record, the overall goal of the research is not at risk of being compromised by such warnings and it is deemed more important not to give participants a false sense of absolute confidentiality.

There is some potential for interviewees to feel that their relationship with Prof Barnaghi obliges them to participate or that they are putting their professional reputation at risk by discussing ethical challenges. The PIS assures potential participants that they are under no obligation and explains that only Christine Hine will have access to the recordings and list of participants. Prof Barnaghi will not be provided with the list of participants nor be given access to audio-recordings of interviews. He will only be given access to pseudonymised data in the form that would also be offered to the UK Data Archive (with appropriate participant consent in place).

Any participants recruited through snowballing will be required to contact Christine Hine directly to signal their interest in participating. This ensures that their personal details will not be shared without their consent and limits the extent to which participants will know who else among their contacts has agreed to participate unless they choose to reveal this information to one another.

Some potential participants will be employed at the University of Surrey. They will be assured that they are under no obligation to participate and will be warned, as other interviewees, that while there are arrangements to ensure confidentiality there remains a potential that their unique details will render them identifiable. None will be line managers of or line managed by Christine Hine. The scope of the interviews does not cover issues that offer significant risk of concerns about misconduct arising but if any allegations should be made the participant will be directed towards the appropriate process for reporting.

### Dissemination

The findings from this series of interviews will be combined with results of the other phases of the research to contribute to conference presentations and journal articles by the co-applicants. One will be aimed at a Science and Technology Studies audience and focus on the contribution to our understanding of how ethical socio-technical infrastructures are built. The second will be aimed at the community developing smart technologies for care settings and focus on highlighting the recommendations for governance mechanisms that emerge from participant perspectives. A social media presence will be developed to share emerging findings and form a focal point for collecting and disseminating insights into the everyday ethics of smart technologies and formulating best practice. Following completion of the project a book-length publication accessible to a non-specialist audience will be developed to broaden access to the project’s findings and inform best practice on managing the ethics of smart care. These publications may make use of anonymised quotations from interviews, chosen so as to avoid use of any specific identifying details.

**Amendment History**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Amendment No.** | **Protocol version no.** | **Date issued** | **Author(s) of changes** | **Details of changes made** |
| 1 | 2.0 | 2/2/21 | Christine Hine | Response to queries FASS 20-21 028 EGA Q1. See also amendments to Appendix 6, 7 8 and new Appendix 9. Added non-profit employees in addition to university and commercial company employees as potential interviewees. |

List details of all protocol amendments here whenever a new version of the protocol is produced.

Appendix 1 Email to be sent by Prof Barnaghi to introduce the research to potential participants

I am emailing to introduce [Christine Hine](https://www.surrey.ac.uk/people/christine-hine) to you. She is a sociologist at University of Surrey who has been funded by the [Royal Society’s APEX scheme](https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/apex-awards/) for interdisciplinary research to collaborate with me. Christine is conducting research that is aimed at helping us to understand how better to anticipate and handle ethical challenges in developing smart care. She is currently looking to interview people involved in research and development in this field to hear about their experiences. She hopes to interview people with a variety of backgrounds and job roles from our team. She would like to hear your thoughts about the kind of challenges these projects face now and in the future. At a later stage in the research she will be interviewing people living with dementia and their carers and also clinicians, but this first phase focuses on us as the research and development community.

Please consider helping Christine in this important research – you can contact Christine directly ([c.hine@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:c.hine@surrey.ac.uk)) to learn more about volunteering for an interview.

Appendix 2 Confirmation from Prof Barnaghi of his role

From: Barnaghi, Payam <p.barnaghi@imperial.ac.uk>

Sent: 17 December 2020 14:58

To: Hine, Christine Prof (Sociology)

Subject: Re: Next steps

You are welcome and I am glad the meeting with Ramin was helpful. I knew Ramin will be a very resourceful person to speak to.

Regarding the interview and data sharing: that's absolutely fine. I didn't expect you will share personally identifiable information with me.

Have a nice Christmas holiday and all the best wishes for 2021!

Best regards,

Payam

From: Christine Hine <c.hine@surrey.ac.uk>

Sent: 17 December 2020 13:54

To: Barnaghi, Payam <p.barnaghi@imperial.ac.uk>

Subject: Next steps

Many thanks for a really useful meeting and also for the very helpful introduction to Ramin Nilforooshan. I had a really productive meeting with him exploring routes to collaboration on an IRAS application for the interviews with NHS staff, carers and people living with dementia.

I’m putting together the full package of materials needed to apply to University of Surrey ethics committee for interviews with researchers and developers working in a University or commercial setting. As we discussed, when the time comes it would be great if you could send an email introducing the study to members of your research team. I’ll be able to give you a draft email to describe what I’m asking of people – anyone interested can then contact me by email and I’ll then share the full participant information sheet and consent form with them. As we discussed, I won’t be sharing raw interview recordings with you, nor the list of who has participated, but we can collaborate on analysing the themes that emerge from pseudonymised interview data. This would hopefully help to avoid any sense of obligation from individuals across your team that they have to participate.

Does this sound OK to you? If so, it would be great if you could respond to this email in the affirmative and I can include this exchange in the ethics application.

Best wishes

Christine

Prof Christine Hine

Department of Sociology

University of Surrey

Guildford, Surrey GU2 7NX

Appendix 3 Emails to be sent to UK DRI Care and Technology Team following on from presentation to team meeting

Initial email

Many thanks indeed for the opportunity to introduce myself to you at the recent team meeting [insert details] and to explain about the research that I am conducting on the everyday ethics of smart care. As I explained, I would be very grateful for volunteers willing to take part in an interview to explore your experiences of working in this kind of project and your thoughts on the various kinds of challenge that these projects face now and in the future. I am interested in talking to people across as wide as possible a range of job roles and professional backgrounds. I hope to make the interviews an interesting and enjoyable opportunity to explore your views and insights. If you are interested in learning more about the interviews please email me and I will send an information sheet and consent form.

Follow up email to be sent after two weeks

This is just a quick reminder that I am looking for volunteers willing to take part in an interview to explore your experiences of working on smart care projects and your thoughts on the various kinds of challenge that these projects face now and in the future. I am interested in talking to people across as wide as possible a range of job roles and professional backgrounds and I have particular gaps for people in [specify job roles]. I hope to make the interviews an interesting and enjoyable opportunity to explore your views and insights. If you are interested in learning more about the interviews please email me and I will send an information sheet and consent form. I will not keep sending reminders to you all now to avoid filling up your inboxes – but I will still be conducting interviews until September 2021 so please contact me if you’d like to hear more.

Appendix 4 Emails to be sent by Christine Hine to introduce the research to potential participants not introduced by Prof Barnaghi

I hope you will forgive me an unsolicited email. I am writing to introduce a research project that I am conducting and to ask whether you might consider taking part. I am a sociologist at University of Surrey, funded by the [Royal Society’s APEX scheme](https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/apex-awards/) for interdisciplinary research to conduct a research project aimed at helping us to understand how to anticipate and handle ethical challenges in developing smart care. I am currently looking to interview people involved in research and development in this field to hear about their experiences. I have identified you as a potential interviewee based on the information that I found at xxxxxxx [insert website or other public source]. It would be very useful for my research to hear about your experiences of xxxxx [insert specific details of potential participant’s position] and I would very much appreciate it if you would consider taking part in an interview. At a later stage in the research I will be interviewing people living with dementia and their carers and also clinicians, but this first phase focuses on the research and development community in university, non-profit and commercial settings.

Please reply by email if you would be interested in learning more about the research and I will send an information sheet and consent form. If I don’t hear back from you in one week I will send a reminder, but if I don’t hear back from you after that I will assume that you won’t be taking part and apologise for bothering you.

Text of reminder email

I am just following up on my email of last week (included below) to ask if you would be interested helping with this research project. Please reply by email if you would be interested in learning more about the research and I will send an information sheet and consent form. If I don’t hear back from you I will assume that you won’t be taking part and apologise for bothering you.

I hope you will forgive me an unsolicited email. I am writing to introduce a research project that I am conducting and to ask whether you might consider taking part. I am a sociologist at University of Surrey, funded by the Royal Society’s APEX scheme for interdisciplinary research to conduct a research project aimed at helping us to understand how to anticipate and handle ethical challenges in developing smart care. I am currently looking to interview people involved in research and development in this field to hear about their experiences. I have identified you as a potential interviewee based on the information that I found at xxxxxxx [insert website or other public source]. It would be very useful for my research to hear about your experiences of xxxxx [insert specific details of potential participant’s position] and I would very much appreciate it if you would consider taking part in an interview. At a later stage in the research I will be interviewing people living with dementia and their carers and also clinicians, but this first phase focuses on the research and development community in university, non-profit and commercial settings.

Appendix 5 Emails to be sent by Christine Hine to potential participants who show an interest in the research following initial email advertisements

Thank you very much for expressing an interest in taking part in research into the perspectives of researchers and developers on the everyday ethics of smart care. I am keen to hear about your experiences and would hope to make the interview an interesting and enjoyable opportunity to reflect. I have attached an information sheet and consent form. Please read the information sheet and feel free to ask me any questions that you may have. If you are happy to go ahead please email the completed consent form back to me and I will work with you to find a mutually convenient time for the interview. If I don’t hear back from you in one week I will send a reminder to ask if you are still interested in taking part, but if I don’t hear back from you after that I will assume that you won’t be taking part.

Text of reminder email

I am just following up on my email of last week (included below) to ask if you would be interested helping with this research project. Please reply by email if you would be interested in taking part, or have any questions to help you to decide. If I don’t hear back from you I will assume that you won’t be taking part and apologise for bothering you.

Thank you very much for expressing an interest in taking part in research into the perspectives of researchers and developers on the everyday ethics of smart care. I am keen to hear about your experiences and would hope to make the interview an interesting and enjoyable opportunity to reflect. I have attached an information sheet and consent form. Please read the information sheet and feel free to ask me any questions that you may have. If you are happy to go ahead please email the completed consent form back to me and I will work with you to find a mutually convenient time for the interview.