**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRACTITIONERS (INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS)**



**Study Title: The Relations Study**

You are being invited to take part in our research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

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| **Why is the study being done?** | Parents who use drugs and their children include some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised families in society. Improving their lives is therefore a key goal for health and social care services as well as for government.  While the UK has established ways of working with families affected by parental drug use there is wide variation in these policies and practices and little knowledge of how these operate in practice (within and across different agencies) and how they impact on children and families.  **There is a need to look at how the whole system works from a family and service perspective.** Our study does this by interviewing, observing and spending time with parents and their families as well as health and social care services to understand more about how the system works.  An important part of the study involves exploring the views and experiences of **practitioners working in services** who have direct experience of providing support to this population. |
| **Why have I been chosen to take part?** | You have been invited to take part because you are a practitioner who works directly with parents who use drugs, their children or families. In your role, you are likely to have regular contact with parents, children and/or family members and/or responsibility for the provision of help and support to them. |
| **Do I have to take part in the study?** | No. It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Involvement in the study is entirely **voluntary**. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be asked to sign a **consent** form. If you join the study, you are **free to withdraw** at any time, without giving a reason. |
| **If I take part, what will it involve?** | The researcher will invite you to participate in a one-to-one interview and/or focus group with the researcher, or a series of interviews and/or focus groups. You can decide how much or how little you would like to be involved in the study.  Interviews and focus groups can be arranged at a time that suits you and can be conducted over the telephone, via video call (MS Teams) or in person, whatever is most convenient. They normally last around one hour. With your consent, the researcher will audio-record the interview(s) and/or focus groups, and the audio-recording will be transcribed.  During the interview or focus group, the researcher will facilitate a discussion on topics related to the care of parents who use drugs and their families. You might discuss your specific role and remit, your views on current policy and practice, how services are delivered to families, and practice issues that you think are important.  **Typically, their might be some discussion on topics such as:**   * How parents who use drugs and their children are identified. * How you/your service approaches assessment * How you plan and provide support for parents/families; * How you work with other professionals and services to provide support and make decisions about care for families. * How you deal with any challenges. * How you respond to parents/families over time, or when things change e.g. specific events or developments in the lives of families. * You views on the impact of COVID-19. |
| **What are the benefits of taking part?** | Taking part in this study may not result in any direct benefit to you or your organisation. However, we hope that the information you provide will help to improve services and outcomes for children and families affected by parental drug use in the future. The study aims to include a wide range of stakeholders in the study to ***give everyone a voice***. |
| **What are the potential risks of taking part?** | There are no anticipated risks or disadvantages for you if you take part in this study. The research team will ensure your participation causes minimal disruption to your normal work routine.   |  | | --- | | **COVID-19 Statement**  Please note that due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all research activity will be conducted in accordance with current national/local public health guidance, and in line with any organisational procedures in your service, for the safety and protection of staff and researchers. | |
| **Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?** | All information you provide for the research study will be kept strictly **confidential**. Your name and any other information you provide for the research, or disclose in research interviews, which might identify you or other people will be removed or changed so no one can be recognised. |
| **What will happen to the results of the study?** | The results of the study will be written up in a report to the funder. We will also publish the results in academic journals and present the findings at conferences or other events for policymakers, professionals and the public.  We also plan to present the findings in other countries, and we will put the findings on our study website so the public can access the study results and outputs.  The website address is: [https://relations.stir.ac.uk](https://relations.stir.ac.uk/) |
| **Who is the funder and sponsor of the research?** | This study has been funded by the *Economic and Social Research Council.*  *Project reference number: ES/S015809/1*.  The *University of Stirling* is the study Sponsor. |
| **Who is doing the research?** | The research project is being done by a large team of researchers based in Scotland, England and overseas.  **The Chief Investigator is Professor Anne Whittaker**  Address: NMAHP Research Unit, Pathfoot Building, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA. Telephone/text: 07487 593413  Email: [anne.whittaker@stir.ac.uk](mailto:anne.whittaker@stir.ac.uk)  ***Other UK project staff include:*** Dr Polly Radcliffe; Dr Emily Finch; Professor Jane Callaghan; Dr Hannah Carver; Dr Alison Munro; Dr Amy Chandler; Dr Emma Wincup; and Professor Avril Taylor.  ***International project staff include:*** Professor Thomas McMahon, USA; Professor Miriam Boeri, USA; Dr Amy Salmon, Canada; Dr Fiona Martin, Canada; Dr Anna Olsen, Australia.  ***The study researchers include:***  Dr Emma Coles, Dr James Todd, Dr Melanie Dembinsky and Calum Lindsay (University of Stirling)  Dr Landon Kuester and Ms Lucy Cullen (Kings College London) |
| **Who has approved this study?** | All research in Health and Social Care is looked at by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the NHS North of Scotland Research Ethics Committee (Reference: 21/NS/0029). |
| **What if I want independent advice?** | If you would like to discuss the study with someone who is not directly involved in the project, please contact: ***Dr Emma France***, Associate Professor, NMAHP Research Unit, Pathfoot Building, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA.  Email: [emma.france@stir.ac.uk](mailto:emma.france@stir.ac.uk) |
| **What if something goes wrong?** | In the unlikely event that something goes wrong and you are harmed during the research and this is due to someone‘s negligence then you may have grounds for a legal action for compensation against the University of Stirling who is sponsoring this study but you may have to pay your legal costs.  If you wish to make a formal complaint about the study please contact:  ***The Complaints Investigations Co-ordinator***, Academic Registry & Governance Services, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA.  Email: [complaints@stir.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@stir.ac.uk) |
| **How do I contact the research team?** | If you would like to discuss the study in more detail, please contact:  ***Professor Anne Whittaker***, Chief Investigator  Telephone/text: 07487 593413 Email: [anne.whittaker@stir.ac.uk](mailto:anne.whittaker@stir.ac.uk)  If you would like to speak to one of the researchers, please contact:  ***Dr Emma Coles***  Telephone/text: 07856 598144 Email: [emma.coles@stir.ac.uk](mailto:emma.coles@stir.ac.uk)  ***Dr James Todd***  Telephone/text: 07776 681363 Email: [james.todd@stir.ac.uk](mailto:james.todd@stir.ac.uk)  ***Dr Melanie Dembinsky***  Telephone/text: 07795 092280 Email [melanie.dembinsky@stir.ac.uk](mailto:melanie.dembinsky@stir.ac.uk)  ***Mr Calum Lindsay***  Telephone/text: 07468 375346 Email: calum.lindsay1@stir.ac.uk |
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If you decide to take part in the study, please keep a copy of this information sheet and please read the **appendix** on the following page, which tells you about how we will use information about you for the study and how to get further advice about data protection and your privacy rights.

For further information on the study please visit our website: [https://relations.stir.ac.uk](https://relations.stir.ac.uk/)

**Appendix: Data Protection and Use of Your Information**

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| **How will we use information about you?** | We will need to use information from you for this research study. The research team will use this information to do the research.  This information will include your name, job title/organisation, contact details (address, telephone number, email address),  We will also ask you to provide personal information on the following:   * age, gender and ethnicity * length of time in your current post * professional/academic qualifications * specialist training/education on the topic * description of your role and remit in the service * your personal and professional views and experiences on the topic.   **We will keep all information about you safe and secure.** We will follow UK laws and privacy rules. This means that your information will be treated in accordance with the *General Data Protection Regulation* (GDPR) and the *Data Protection Act* 2018.  Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the information so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.  ***Personal data:*** All your ‘personal identifiable information’ will be kept securely on University computers. Only research project staff, based at the University, will be able to access this information, and it will be destroyed within one year of the end of the study.  ***Anonymity – protecting your identity:*** When you join the study, you will be given a unique identification or ‘ID’ code. This will be written on your consent form. We will then use your ID code on all your research records *instead of your real name*. Your name and any other information you provide for the research that might identify you, your organisation or another person will be removed or changed so no one can be recognised.  ***Audio recordings:*** If you agree to an audio-recorded interview with the researcher, they will use a secure device to record it. They will download the recording as soon as possible onto the University secure computer system and then delete the recording from the device.  With your permission, we will use a University approved **professional ‘transcription’ service** to type up your audio-recording, word for word. The researcher will check the written record of your interview and ‘anonymise’ it. This means that if we use any direct quotes from your interview, no one will know it is you. The name of the **professional service** we will use is Syntax Secretarial Solutions: [www.syntaxsecretarial.com](http://www.syntaxsecretarial.com)  ***Research data:*** All other information about you, including the researcher’s own notes, will be stored securely on University computers and only research project staff will be able to access this information – we call this research data ‘pseudo-anonymised data’ because it does not contain any names or information that would identify people. This data will be stored securely for up to 10 years after the end of the study in line with University rules on storing research data. |
| **What are my choices about how my information is used?** | You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.  We need to manage your information in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won’t be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.  ***Future research studies:*** If you agree to take part in the study, we will ask your consent to store your pseudo-anonymised research data for future ethically approved studies. If you agree, access to your data would be strictly controlled and stored in the **UK Data Service** (<https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/>). |
| **Where can I find out more about how my information is used?** | You can find out more about how we use your information  • by asking one of the research team  • by ringing us on 07487 593413  • by sending an email to [nmahp.relations@stir.ac.uk](mailto:nmahp.relations@stir.ac.uk)  If you would like more information on how we manage your data in the University of Stirling, please see our **Privacy Notice**: [www.stir.ac.uk/privacy](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.stir.ac.uk%2Fprivacy&data=04%7C01%7Cemma.coles%40stir.ac.uk%7C7e13cc47a55b49a3790f08d90328ff07%7C4e8d09f7cc794ccb9149a4238dd17422%7C0%7C0%7C637544296890542052%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=8EoAMhuvZSJTt6nyoZXzoHBNYBIhing8NYQ3pOsdDs0%3D&reserved=0)  If you have concerns about data protection please contact:  ***Data Protection Officer***, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA.  Email: [data.protection@stir.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@stir.ac.uk)  If you are not happy with their response or believe they are processing your data in a way that is not right or lawful, you can complain to the **Information Commissioner’s Office** (ICO) ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or 0303 123 1113). |