**Voicing Loss: Group A (Coronial Professionals) Interview Schedule**

**Opening section**

* Introductions, welcome. Check time available for interview.
* Ask interviewee how they would like to be referred to.
* Consent: If in person and consent form not already returned, go through consent form & ask interviewee to complete it. If remote, confirm receipt/understanding of form submitted in advance, or obtain oral consent on a separate recording.
* Emphasise to interviewee that they can take a break at any point or stop all together, & that while we want them to be open & honest with us, they are only to share what they feel comfortable sharing – we will move on if they ask us to, or if we assess that that is what we should do.
* Explain use of open-ended questions – that we are interested in hearing about their views and experiences.

*Essential questions are in orange below*

|  |
| --- |
| **Core questions**  **A) Should bereaved people be ‘at the heart of’ the coroner process?**  **B) What does it mean for bereaved people to be ‘at the heart of’ the process?**  **C) Why should bereaved people be ‘at the heart of’ the process?**  **D) What could help bereaved people to be genuinely ‘at the heart of’ the process?** |

**Background**

1. **Please can you tell me what title best describes your role in the Coroner’s Court?**
2. **How long you have had this role?**

Area Coroner/ Senior Coroner/ Acting Senior Coroner/ Assistant Coroner/ Coroners' Officer/ Coroners' Administration Officer/ Coroners' Liaison Officer/ Coroners' Clerk/Clerical Officer/ Coroners' Personal Assistant/ Coroners' Secretary/Coroners' Office (or Service) Manager/ Coroners' Court Officer (or Usher)/ Pathologist/ Barrister/ Solicitor/ Legal Executive/ Regulatory Body Employee/ CCSS Volunteer/ CCSS Employee etc

**Bereaved people’s expectations of coroners’ investigations & inquests**

1. **As you know, we’re interested in hearing about the role of bereaved people in coroners’ investigations and inquests. Thinking about the bereaved people you have contact with as part of your role in the Coroner’s Court/Service:**
2. **In general, what do you think bereaved people tend to want or expect from coroners’ investigations & inquests?**
3. **To what extent, how and in what ways does the coronial investigation & inquest process reflect – or not reflect – bereaved people’s wishes & expectations?**
4. **What, if anything, could or should be done to align what happens in practice to what bereaved people tend to want & expect?**

**The inquest**

1. **Can you tell me [more] about the ways in which bereaved people tend to participate in pre-inquest reviews & inquest hearings?**

*Prompts, as appropriate*

1. What helps, and what hinders, bereaved people’s participation at PIRs and inquests?
2. Do bereaved people usually attend the PIR, if there is one?
3. What kind of involvement do bereaved people tend to have in a PIR?
4. If an inquest is conducted remotely (fully or partly remote), does it have an effect on the treatment of bereaved people and their participation?
5. How does legal representation of bereaved people affect the way they are treated and participate in inquests?
6. How is the treatment & participation of bereaved people affected when other interested persons have legal representation, but they don’t?
7. Does the presence of a jury make any difference to the way bereaved people are treated and participate?
8. What kinds of help, advice or support are bereaved people typically able to access leading up to or during the inquest?
9. How are bereaved people treated during the inquest by coroners and others who are present?
10. How do you think bereaved people’s experiences of inquests are affected by the rooms/buildings in which they are held?
11. How do you think bereaved people’s experiences of inquests are affected by the technology, when they attend remotely?

**Impacts on bereaved people of the coronial process**

1. Overall, what effect, if any, do *you* have on the way bereaved people are treated in coroners’ investigations & inquests?
2. **How do you think bereaved people should be treated during coroners’ investigations and inquests?**

*Probe for more detail, including elaboration of any concepts raised (e.g. fairness, respect)*

1. **Government policy is that bereaved people should be ‘at the heart of’ the Coroners’ Service. Have you heard of this policy aim? Do you think it’s important for people to be at the heart of the service and why/why not? If so, how can this be achieved?**
2. If someone you know was about to experience a coroner’s investigation and inquest as a bereaved person, is there any advice you would give them about what it might be like or what they should do?

**Training**

1. What training have you had relating specifically to your role in the Coroners’ Service?
2. What training have you had in relation to working with bereaved people? If so, was this training useful and what more training (if any) would you want? If not, would you want training to inform your work with bereaved people and of what kinds?
3. To what extent, and how, do you think that working in the Coroner’s Court/Service has an impact on professionals’ emotional or psychological wellbeing?

**Closing questions**

1. Is there anything else that you would like to share about the treatment and role of bereaved people in coroners’ investigations and inquests?
2. Is there anything else you want to say on the issues we have discussed?
3. [If snow-balling] Do you have any colleagues who may be interested in taking part in this research? *If so, discuss arrangements for making contact with colleagues*

**Demographics**

15. Before finishing, I have a couple of short questions on demographics.

1. Please can you tell me your age (approx)?

b. What is your gender?

c. How would you describe your race or ethnicity?

1. *[If not known]* What is the town/city/area where are working within the Coroner’s Service?

**Close**

* Complete follow-up section of consent form.
* Thank for participation and check if they have further queries or comments relating to the project.