

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: **HR/DP-21/22-28599**



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Title of project

Healthier Working Lives and Ageing for Workers in the Care Sector: Developing Careers, Enhancing Continuity, Promoting Wellbeing (HWL)

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project, which forms part of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Healthy Ageing Challenge. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of the project is to assess the challenges and opportunities for the over 50s care workforce, and to develop innovative solutions to improve worker conditions and wellbeing. This will entail some observation and informal conversations with participants, and co-design activities, collaborating with designers and entrepreneurs.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to participate in this project because you work in a residential care home in Scotland and are over 50 years old. To get the broadest understanding of residential care workers' experiences, we are keen to hear from a range of employees and are working with a number of care homes. Therefore, all eligible staff (i.e. those over 50 years old) at participating care homes will be approached.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part in the project, two things will happen:

- 1) An ethnographic element, which means that 1-2 researchers will spend time in your workplace (in staff-only areas, with no contact with residents), observing everyday activities and having informal conversations with staff, taking field notes. The researchers may want to have a conversation with you about your experience working in the care sector. They might ask things like *how could [x] be made easier?* Or *how would you ideally allocate your time/activities across this shift?* We would like to audio record this and take photos, but taking part or being recorded or photographed is entirely your choice. If you wish to have conversations in a private space, this can be

arranged. We hope to spend several hours onsite, observing day shift activities, shift handovers and night shifts, to get a good idea of the 'life and culture' of the care home.

If you decline to participate in this part of the study, we will try to conduct observational research and conversations away from where you are and will not record any details or observations of you. You will have no presence in this research project.

- 2) You will also be asked to participate in two co-design activities with researchers and designers, exploring ways to improve conditions for workers over 50 years old in the residential care sector. These will take a maximum of five hours, although in most cases, it will be much less, depending on the nature of the activity, which will be tailored to different participant groups. We will discuss this with you beforehand.

Co-design activities will be selected in consultation with care home managers to align with local capacity (e.g., working in person or online; and length of time of engagement). Activities are categorised by type and by level of intensity of engagement (less than an hour, approximately two hours, or longitudinal). Example low-level engagement activities include 'probes' - responding critically to design artefacts in the care home (e.g., by annotating a poster); example mid-level engagement activities include narrative approaches such as writing 'newspaper headlines of the future' (a supported creative activity imagining desired futures from which to work backwards to possible action in the present); example longitudinal activities include supported co-designing of creative concepts for improving local or systemic situations (e.g., lo-fi prototyping, service user journey mapping and, in the most involved cases, joint development of concepts with external entrepreneurs).

Activities will be selected to align with your own needs or capacity. They may be onsite or online, depending on the type of engagement required. If onsite, refreshments and comfort breaks will be provided.

You will not be asked to provide any personal data. Conversations will be focussed on challenges and opportunities in your working environment. Any identifiable data – about yourself or anyone else – you mention in passing will be anonymised.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read this information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part, we will ask you to sign a consent form and you will be given a copy of this to keep.

Incentives

If you choose to participate in the co-design activities, you will be given a £50 love2shop gift voucher, which can be spent at a wide range of high street stores and online.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

Depending on your experiences working in the care sector, it is possible that some conversations may involve recalling unpleasant memories or feelings. You will never be asked to discuss anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. If you should feel stress or anxiety at any time during the research, you are welcome to take a break or stop the conversation. The researcher will be familiar with any local support policies or facilities, can offer support in the form of non-judgmental listening, or take you to a quiet room, get a colleague or manager, or leave you alone. If needed, they can signpost you to local or national wellbeing and mental health resources.

It is also possible you may make disclosures about working practices or events that defy organisational policy. We will not try to elicit any information that might lead to a disclosure being made. If a disclosure is made, we can discuss this with participants and remind them of both their own, and our, rights and responsibilities. We would only report disclosures if these concern a risk to either you or someone else. Serious disclosures would be reported to care home managers in the first instance, unless the disclosure concerns the manager, in which case, we can discuss a course of action with you.

The above risks (of distress/anxiety or disclosures) may happen during the ethnographic stage or the co-design activity. Due to the nature of some co-design activities, while confidentiality is requested, it cannot be 100% guaranteed. In both cases, the core research team (Andrew Fletcher, Luis Soares, Bettina Zenz) are responsible for looking after participants and will take all necessary actions to support you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The study findings will be used to improve care workers' wellbeing and work environment. By participating in this research, you will have a voice in this issue.

Data handling and confidentiality

Your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018).

- To ensure your confidentiality, all recorded digital data will be stored on an encrypted device.
- All transcripts and field notes will be anonymised using pseudonyms when they are transcribed or (for field notes) when shared with the project team.
- We will only break confidentiality if someone discloses information about a risk to themselves or others, which we have a duty of care to report. Where there is no

potential for harm (e.g. practices that may go against official policy), such instances will not be reported. You will always be able to discuss this with the researcher(s).

- Some participants may wish for their involvement in the research to be known. In these cases, you may choose to waive your anonymity. However, since we will be anonymising data by default, this option will be 'opt-in'.
- Participants have the option to consent for us to store their contact details for future contact about the project and/or other similar projects. These details will be stored securely until 28/02/2027 after which time they will be destroyed.
- In line with the research sponsor's commitment to open data, anonymised data will be made available for re-use or archiving within three months of the end of the project.
- Raw data will only be shared with the immediate research team and relevant third parties (e.g. a transcription service). If data needs to be transferred, this will be done via KCL's secure SharePoint Online service.

Data Protection Statement

If you would like more information about how your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws, please visit the following link:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

This data protection statement is also available in hard copy on request.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way. You may withdraw your data from the project up until the data is anonymised and merged with other individuals' data. After this point, your data will no longer be identifiable and cannot be withdrawn. If you choose to withdraw from the project, we will not retain the information you have given. You may withdraw your data (if identifiable) at any point up until 29 February 2024 (the project end date).

How is the project being funded?

This project is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of the project will be summarised in a project report, which is returned to the funder. Some findings may also be published in peer-reviewed academic journals. No identifiable data will be included in any publication. If you wish to be kept informed about project outputs, these will be detailed on the project website,

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/healthier-working-lives-for-the-care-workforce>.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please email Andrew Fletcher, the ethnographic research lead: Andrew.fletcher@kcl.ac.uk.

What if I have further questions or if something goes wrong?

If this project has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project, you can contact King's College London for further advice and information, using the details below:

The Chair, ***Insert full name of the relevant REP/RESC that approved the project***, rec@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research

After the co-design activities, you will be given a debrief sheet with the following information

Local support/policies

Details of local support provided by care homes will be included here. This may differ between study sites but will be established when each care home is contacted by Scottish Care. Support may include counselling, mental health first aid, quiet rooms, or signposting external local services.

Wider support

If you are concerned about your wellbeing and/or mental health, we recommend you discuss this with a trusted friend or family member, or with your GP.

The following services offer confidential support from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult:

Samaritans: Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours

Shout Crisis Text Line: Text "SHOUT" to 85258 any time day or night

Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/what-can-i-do-to-help-myself-cope/>