



Participant Information Sheet

Study title: Individual beliefs on the biopsychosocial factors that contribute to chronic musculoskeletal pain. A qualitative study.

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study being conducted by the University of Birmingham. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. One of the research team will go through the information sheet with you and answer any questions that you have. Please ask if anything is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

Chronic musculoskeletal pain is defined as pain lasting longer than three months. Existing research identifies many key factors that can contribute to the development and continuation of chronic musculoskeletal pain. We need to understand why individuals feel they develop and continue to experience chronic musculoskeletal pain in order to inform the development of new healthcare approaches to manage these individuals. This study will therefore explore the views, experiences and beliefs of people with chronic musculoskeletal pain.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to take part because you have musculoskeletal pain which has been present for longer than three months.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely your decision whether or not to participate in this study. This information sheet has been given to you by a member of the research team who will be happy to discuss this study with you and answer any questions you may have. Should you decide to take part, the researcher (Mike) who is a highly experienced musculoskeletal physiotherapist will ask you a few questions to confirm that you are eligible to participate and a few questions about your demographic background. If you are eligible to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw from participating at any time, without giving a reason. You will be able to request that any data held about you can be removed, however once research is published it cannot be removed. For that reason, it is unlikely you will be able to withdraw from the study should you choose to do so beyond four weeks after your interview.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be invited to take part in one interview. Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the only method being used to conduct the interview is via Zoom. The interview will be arranged for a time and date which is convenient for you.

What will I have to do?

Interviews will be conducted by the lead researcher, who is a registered and practising senior physiotherapist in the NHS, an experienced researcher and trained in conducting interviews. The interview will include questions around your experiences, thoughts and beliefs in relation to why you have chronic musculoskeletal pain. We estimate the **interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes**, but the interviewer will also spend some time chatting with you before and after the interview to answer any questions and check on your wellbeing. Participation in **the**



interview is entirely voluntary and can be stopped at your request at any point. You have the **option to have a family member present** for the interview at your preference.

The researcher will take notes during the interview and **the interview will be audio recorded using a password protected audio recorder**. The audio recordings will be transcribed word for word by the researcher and, once checked, the **audio recording will be deleted**. **You will not be identifiable in the interview transcripts or the audio recordings**. With your consent, the interview transcript will be forwarded to you so you can review this to ensure it is an accurate reflection of the interview, and you can add any further thoughts or reflections if you would like. This process can be completed via post or email at your preference and you will have the opportunity to talk to the interviewer by video or telephone if required.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

There are no known risks for taking part in this study. One potential disadvantage is that talking about your views, beliefs and experiences with musculoskeletal pain may cause you some emotional distress. We will make every effort to ensure you are comfortable at all times and you can ask for the interview to be paused to take a break if required. We can signpost you to relevant services which may benefit you if needed.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There is no definite benefit for participants of this study. However, reflection on beliefs and thoughts about contributors to chronic musculoskeletal pain is commonly a part of therapeutic intervention and therefore may provide therapeutic benefit. In addition, participants may feel positive that their experiences, thoughts and beliefs recorded through research may help people in the future.

What will happen when the research stops?

All information collected during the study will be anonymised and will be stored on the University of Birmingham's secure Research Data Store. Information will be stored for ten years following the study in accordance with University of Birmingham's research policy, and then destroyed securely.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If you decide you do not wish to carry on with the study, you are free to withdraw at any time up until your interview. Once you have completed your interview you will have four weeks to get in touch with the lead researcher (Mike) should you wish to withdraw participation and therefore remove your interview data from the study. You do not have to provide any reason for your withdrawal and there are no consequences for withdrawing. You will no longer be able to withdraw beyond four weeks after your interview as the data collected may have already been analysed, combined with other data or submitted for publication. All information which is collected about you for the study is anonymised so your identity is fully protected.

What if there is a problem?

It is unlikely there will be any problems during the study. If you have a concern about any aspect of the study for example the way you have been approached or treated during the study please contact the lead researcher (Mike) who will do his best to answer any questions. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the University of Birmingham's Research Governance Officer at researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

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BIRMINGHAM**How will we use information about you?**

We will need to use information from you and the interviews for this research project. Your name and contact details will only be used to contact you to arrange the interview. Interview transcripts will be used for the analysis to provide the results for the research study. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your information will have a code number instead. We will keep all information about you safe and secure in the University of Birmingham's secure Research Data Store. Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in that study. All information that is collected about you in this study will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In accordance with these legislations, confidentiality will only be breached in exceptional circumstances where we are concerned that there is immediate threat to the physical safety of yourself or members of the public.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have. We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see the data we hold about you.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information by asking the lead researcher, Michael Dunn (details below), or University of Birmingham's data protection officer dataprotection@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of this study will be used to inform future research with the aim of improved healthcare for those with, or likely to develop, chronic musculoskeletal pain. The results will be disseminated in scientific journals and presentations at research conferences. You will not be identifiable in any report, publication or presentation. If you are interested in the results of the study, you can obtain a summary of the results by contacting Michael Dunn (details below) and a short summary will be provided to you.

Who is organising and funding this study?

The research is sponsored by the University of Birmingham.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by members of the research team with experience and expertise in chronic musculoskeletal pain as well as members of the public. All research conducted by the University of Birmingham has been reviewed by their own Research Ethics Committee.

Contacts for further information or any questions about this study:

Michael Dunn (Mike), Lead Researcher
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Michael.Dunn@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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