

## **Participant information sheet**

Covid -19 Pandemic: Exploring the lived experiences of older people living in Wales and the use of digital technology.

You are being invited to take part in some research. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully.

### **What is the purpose of the research?**

We are conducting research on older adults' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and the use of digital technology. With COVID-19 pandemic, digital divide has been a particular concern as people became more dependent on internet to access service, health information, support services, medical appointments and connect with friends and family. The purpose of the study is to (1) to explore the lived experiences of older individuals aged 60 and older living in Wales during the lockdown (2) to understand how the disparities in access and proficiency in technology can contribute to negatives outcomes for the older population. Your participation in this study varies for each person, though it is expected to take approximately 20 minutes.

### **Who is carrying out the research?**

The data are being collected by Fernanda Prata, from Swansea University, College of Human & Health sciences. The research has been approved by the College of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

### **What happens if I agree to take part?**

You will be asked to complete the survey; this can be done online or over the phone. We will be asking questions regarding your overall experience during the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g., access to services, communication with friends and the use of digital technology). Additionally, we will ask for some background information including your level of education, your age and sex.

Make sure you only fill out one version of the questionnaire, which will have 12 questions. The questionnaire should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Once you give consent for Age Cymru to share your contact details with the researcher, we will then send you a link to the online questionnaire via email. Before submitting your survey answers, you will need to provide consent, after this the online survey will be forwarded to the researcher's secure Qualtrics online account for review. At the end you will receive a debrief email explaining what happens next.

If you choose to take the survey over the phone, we will be contacting you to arrange a time at your most convenient time to conduct the survey. We will provide you with all the information regarding the research and how we will be using your data. Consent will be sought verbally if you are taking the survey over the phone. You will also receive a debrief at the end of the telephone call.

### **Are there any risks associated with taking part?**

The research has been approved by the College of Human and Health Sciences Research

Ethics Committee. There are no significant risks associated with participation. It is possible that some questions could cause you distress, as they might remind you of potentially unpleasant experiences associated with the current Covid-19 pandemic. Should this happen, please seek support through Age Cymru.

### **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Your data will only be viewed by the researcher and Age Cymru.

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer file. All paper records will be destroyed after being scanned and stored in a password-protected computer file.

- If you are requesting the survey in paper format, your consent information will be kept separately from your responses to minimise risk in the event of a data breach.
- If you are taking the online survey consent is through a tick box on the Qualtrics survey.
- If you are taking the survey over the telephone consent will be sought verbally.

Please note that the data we will collect for our study will be made anonymous. Participant's personal information will not be shared without the participants expressed consent, and their identities will not be associated with their responses. Consent form will be stored separately from survey answers. Thus, it will not be possible to identify and remove your data later, should you decide to withdraw from the study. Therefore, if at the end of this research you decide to have your data withdrawn, please let us know before you submit the survey.

Please note that if data is being collected online, once the data has been submitted online you will be unable to withdraw your information.

### **What will happen to the information I provide?**

An analysis of the information will form part of our report at the end of the study and may be presented to interested parties and published in scientific journals and related media.

### **Is participation voluntary and what if I wish to later withdraw?**

Your participation is entirely voluntary – you do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, but later wish to withdraw from the study, then you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty. However, this must be done before submitting the survey, as we will not be possible to identify and remove your data later, should you decide to withdraw from the study.

### **Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The data controller for this project will be Swansea University. The University Data Protection Officer provides oversight of university activities involving the processing of personal data and can be contacted at the Vice Chancellors Office.

Your personal data will be processed for the purposes outlined in this information sheet.

Standard ethical procedures will involve you giving your consent to participate in this study by completing the consent form that was provided to you or read to you over the phone, where you will need to give verbal consent before the start of the research. If you are taking the survey online, the consent form is an online checkbox.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process your personal data will be processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. This public interest justification is approved by the College of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee, Swansea University.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process special categories of data will be processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

### **How long will your information be held?**

Data will be preserved and accessible **for a minimum of 10 years after completion of the research**. Records from studies with major health, clinical, social, environmental or heritage importance, novel intervention, or studies which are on-going or controversial should be retained for at least 20 years after completion of the study. It may be appropriate to keep such study data permanently within the university, a national collection, or as required by the funder's data policy.

### **What are your rights?**

You have a right to access your personal information, to object to the processing of your personal information, to rectify, to erase, to restrict and to port your personal information. Please visit the University Data Protection webpages for further information in relation to your rights.

Any requests or objections should be made in writing to the University Data Protection Officer:-

University Compliance Officer (FOI/DP)  
Vice-Chancellor's Office  
Swansea University  
Singleton Park  
Swansea  
SA2 8PP  
Email: [dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk)

### **How to make a complaint**

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data has been processed, you may in the first instance contact the University Data Protection Officer using the contact details above.

If you remain dissatisfied, then you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

Information Commissioner's Office,  
Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane,  
Wilmslow,  
Cheshire,  
SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

**What if I have other questions?**

If you have further questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact us:

**Researcher**

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