

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: HR-25/26-53059



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

How parents understand and respond to their children when they are unwell, and how public health messages can help this process.

Thank you for expressing interest in taking part in my PhD research project. This information sheet will detail what taking part will look like so you can make an informed decision about participation.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project which forms part of my PhD research. 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 take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. **Please 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 this project is to understand how parents understand and respond to their children's respiratory symptoms when they are unwell, and how public health messages can help improve this process. This work will inform future public health messaging to help other parents and their children.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to participate in this project because you are a parent or legal guardian based in England with at least one child currently aged between 0 to 11 years old.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to be involved in the project, you will take part in an interview that lasts up to 60 minutes. The interview will take place either in person or online via Microsoft Teams (your choice). Interviews will be audio recorded. For participants meeting online, you will be asked to keep your camera on, but you will not be video recorded.

At the start of the interview, we will ask you to briefly show a document confirming that you are i) the parent or legal guardian of a child currently aged 0-11 years (e.g. a birth certificate or Personal Child Health Record known as a "red book") and ii) a document confirming that you live in England (e.g. a recent utility bill or driving license). This will be a visual check only, and no copies will be taken or stored on King's systems. We carry out this verification to help ensure that everyone taking part meets the study's eligibility criteria, which supports the quality and reliability of the research findings.

As part of the interview, you may be asked questions on topics such as: family structure; children's health; respiratory symptom knowledge; health behaviour; health communication; and understanding of public health messages. There are no right or wrong answers; we are just interested in hearing your views. For example, we will ask questions like: 'Can you recall a time recently when your child/children was/were unwell? How could you tell?'. You will

then be shown some different public health messages, such as those shared by NHS England, and asked to provide your thoughts and feedback.

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 using the details at the bottom of this document if you have any questions.

If you decide to take part, we will ask you to sign a consent form where you will be asked to indicate that you have read and understood the information provided on this information sheet, and that you consent to your data being used for the purposes explained.

Incentives

After completion of your interview, you will receive a £30 participation payment as a token of thanks and appreciation for your time. This will be paid via a voucher from Voucher Express: [VEX E-Gift Cards | Voucher Express](#). Please note it is one £30 voucher per interviewee, not per interview.

If you take part in person, you may also claim reasonable expenses, such as for travel or childcare. **These must be clarified and agreed with the research team before your interview date.**

What are the possible risks of taking part?

It is unlikely that taking part in this research will pose a risk to you. However, during the interview you will be asked some questions about your child/children's health. If you feel distressed at any point during the interview, the interview and recording will be paused. You will then be asked if you would like to continue, reschedule or stop the interview.

Please note you can withdraw from the interview at any time if you change your mind, or opt out of answering a question, but multiple missed questions/incomplete interviews may not be eligible for a voucher.

In the event that you feel distressed after taking part in the interview, you can contact the following services for support:

- **NHS:** You can find out more about influenza, known as flu, including the signs and symptoms to be aware of and how to treat it, on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/>

You can find out more about Strep-A including the signs and symptoms to be aware of and how to treat it, on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/strep-a/>

If you have concerns about signs and symptoms you or your child may be displaying, you can contact the NHS non-emergency phone line on 111.

For emergencies, please call 999 or visit your nearest hospital A&E.

- **Mind:** For emotional support and information, for you or your children, visit <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- **Samaritans:** For immediate mental health support, call 116 123. Free, open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Or visit: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Other than the £30 voucher per interviewee, there are no direct benefits of taking part.

Data handling and confidentiality

King's College London is the Sponsor of this research and is responsible for looking after your information.

We will need to collect and use some information from you (such as your name (for keeping in contact, not publishing), age, ethnicity, contact details, family health information) for this research project. The research team will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly.

Interview transcripts will also be shared with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to help with analysis. These transcripts will use pseudonyms, meaning you will be given a false first name. Besides this, we will never release data which contains information which could potentially identify you. We will not pass your contact details on to third parties.

We would like to publish one or more scientific papers about this research. If we include direct quotes in any published material, we will use a pseudonym (a false first name) that cannot be linked back to you. Any references you make to specific people or places will be reworded in the text to make sure that we do not give any clues that might identify you.

Your data will be processed in compliance with UK data protection laws, including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Data will be stored securely and will be accessed by the research team at King's College London until the completion of this PhD in January 2030. After this date, personal data, interview recordings and transcripts will be deleted. At this point, fully anonymous versions of the interview transcripts will be kept in an open access data repository indefinitely. This will allow other researchers to check our work, and to use the transcripts in future studies that they are conducting.

Further information on how King's processes research data can be found at:
<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

Please contact the research team if you require further information on data processing or a printed version of the webpage link above.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw at any point of the project, without having to give a reason. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way. You can withdraw your data from the project up until 1 month after your interview. If you choose to withdraw from the project,

we will not retain the information you have provided. It is not possible to withdraw after this date as the data will have been committed to the final report.

How is the project being funded?

This project is being funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health Protection Focus Award (HPRFA) in Outbreak Related Behaviour (ORB). This is a formal partnership between King's College London, the University of East Anglia, and the UKHSA.

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of the project will be summarised in research publications, reports and a PhD student thesis. The results may also be shared in presentations, conferences and internal and external seminars.

If you wish to receive a copy of the findings once a paper has been published, please use the contact details below.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact me using the following contact details:

Miss Eleanor M Jackson (PhD Student)

Based at: Weston Education Centre, King's College London, Denmark Hill Campus, Cutcombe Road, London, SE5 9RJ

Email: eleanor.jackson@kcl.ac.uk (*preferred method of contact*)

Telephone: 07842 869817 (*team phone number*)

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 using the details below for further advice and information:

Professor James Rubin (PhD Supervisor)

Based at: Weston Education Centre, King's College London, Denmark Hill Campus, Cutcombe Road, London, SE5 9RJ

Email: Gideon.rubin@kcl.ac.uk (*preferred method of contact*)

Telephone: 07842 869817 (*team phone number*)

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