

## **What factors have impacted on older peoples (75+) access to and engagement with digital public services during covid-19?**

### **Participant Information Sheet (PIS)**

You are being invited to take part in a research study – “What factors have impacted on older peoples (75+) access to and engagement with digital public services during covid-19?” Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully before deciding whether to take part, and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

#### **About the research**

##### **➤ Who will conduct the research?**

The research team for this project are: Jane McDermott and Annemarie Money (Joint Principal investigators), Dr Alex Hall (Co-investigator), Alison Littlewood (Collaborator), and Professor Chris Todd (Co-investigator)

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

This project aims to understand the factors that might affect an older person accessing digital services online. When we refer to digital services we mean those Government based services that you apply for, renew or access online. This includes things like applying for benefits, renewing passports or driving licences, completing tax returns or paying council tax.

Some groups of people, such as those who don't have much money, those with a disability, or older people, may have problems using the internet or getting help from services like the council, if they can't use a computer or a smartphone. In Greater Manchester, this may affect as many as 1.2 million people, and a large number of these people are over the age of 75. The Covid-19 pandemic made us realise the scale of this issue with many people cut off during the early lockdowns. In May 2021, following his re-election as Mayor, Andy Burnham has said he wants Greater Manchester to become one of the first places in the world to equip all over-75s with the skills, knowledge, and technology to get online.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are over the age of 75, live in Greater Manchester and are either involved in a digital skills programme (for example, Tech and Tea or Starting Point) or you are not interested in getting online, or have yet to have support in getting online. We will be talking to around 20 older adults for this project.

➤ **Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

Yes, they will be written up in a final report and possibly published in an academic journal.

➤ **Potential disclosures**

If during our conversation you reveal any information which means you may be at risk of harm, we will be required to break confidentiality in order to put you in touch with the correct support. This may involve signposting you to relevant support services, calling a family member or friend or calling emergency services.

➤ **Who has reviewed the research project?**

This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Manchester Proportionate Research Ethics Committee [Ref: 2021-12638-20811]

➤ **Who is funding the research project?**

The project has been funded by the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the Applied Research Collaboration at The University of Manchester.

**What would my involvement be?**

➤ **What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

If you decide to take part, you will be contacted by a researcher from The University of Manchester to have a chat about your level of internet use and reasons why you may or may not use the internet. We can do this chat either by telephone, or for those people that prefer it and are able to, we can have the chat online. The chat usually lasts 30mins (but can last up to 45mins) and you will only be asked to take part once. Everything that you tell us will be kept confidential and anonymised.

We will record the chat over the telephone using a special recorder (called a Dictaphone) which has the ability to store your information securely so that no-one else apart from the research team can access it (a process known as encryption). If you choose an online chat then only your voice will be recorded. These will take place at your convenience at a time

and date best suited for you. Prior to starting the chat you will be asked to say that you are happy to participate (what we call verbal consent).

### **Will I be compensated for taking part?**

Yes, you will receive a £15 'Love2shop' voucher as a thank you for your time which will be given to you by the person who provided you with the information about the project.

### **➤ What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Taking part is voluntary; please feel free to discuss the study with others first before deciding whether or not to take part. If, after you have read this sheet through, you need more information about the research project, please contact Dr Annemarie Money, the researcher from The University of Manchester who is doing this research. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and will also be given a consent form to read; you will be asked to say you are happy to take part at the beginning of the chat (giving verbal consent). If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. If you decide not to take part you do not need to do anything further.

### **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

For those of you who prefer an online chat please note the following guidance about this:

Your participation in this research will be recorded in [Skype/Zoom] and your personal data will be processed by [Microsoft/Zoom]. This may mean that your personal data is transferred to a country outside of the European Economic Area, some of which have not yet been determined by the United Kingdom to have an adequate level of data protection. Appropriate legal mechanisms to ensure these transfers are compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation are in place. The recordings will be removed from the above third party platform and stored on The University of Manchester managed file storage as soon as possible following the completion of data collection.

### **➤ What information will you collect about me?**

In order to participate in this research project we will need to collect information that could identify you, called "personal identifiable information". Specifically we will need to collect:

- age, sex and ethnicity

➤ **Under what legal basis are you collecting this information?**

We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with UK data protection law which protect your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is “a public interest task” and “a process necessary for research purposes”.

➤ **What are my rights in relation to the information you will collect about me?**

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings.

If you would like to know more about your different rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our [Privacy Notice for Research](#).

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37095>

➤ **Will my participation in the study be confidential and my personal identifiable information be protected?**

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

Only the study team at The University of Manchester will have access to your personal information, and they will anonymise it as soon as possible. Your name and any other identifying information will be removed and replaced with a random ID number. Only the research team will have access to the key that links this ID number to your personal information. Your consent form and contact details will be retained for two years and stored electronically on an encrypted computer at The University of Manchester; all paper copies of consent forms will be destroyed.

Anonymised data will be held for a minimum of five years after the study has been completed to allow us to publish our findings. The audio recordings of your interview will be destroyed once the interviews have been transcribed. The audio recordings will be transcribed by a University approved transcription service, following University protocol. All personal identifiable information will be removed from the final transcript. Your data will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team.

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected for this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

### **What if I have a complaint?**

#### **➤ Minor complaints**

If you have a minor complaint about this study, then please contact the researcher in the first instance:

Dr Annemarie Money, 5.321 Jean McFarlane building, University of Manchester, M13 9PY, Tel: 0161 306 7777 or email: [annemarie.money@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:annemarie.money@manchester.ac.uk)

#### **➤ Formal complaints**

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact

The Research Ethics Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: [research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk) or by telephoning 0161 306 8089.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email [dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk) or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information, you can do this via the website <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/> or via telephone: 0303 123 1113

### **Contact Details**

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the researcher:

**Dr Annemarie Money, 5.321 Jean McFarlane building, University of Manchester, M13 9PY, Tel: 0161 306 7777 or email: [annemarie.money@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:annemarie.money@manchester.ac.uk)**