

IRAS Project ID: 274776

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET/CONSENT

Project title: Mental Health Wellbeing at University: Student Survey exploring mental health wellbeing and access to support in UK Universities.

You are being invited to take part in a research study exploring student wellbeing and reasons behind mental health difficulties, access to support services and their experiences of these services. Before you decide if you want to take part, we would like to inform you about why the research is being undertaken. Please take time to decide whether you would like to take part. Please ask for clarification of any points and discuss it with others if you wish.

Background:

A group of researchers from Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Southampton are exploring undergraduate and postgraduate student's wellbeing and reasons behind difficulties with mental health across the years of their study to allow for greater understanding of difficulties experienced.

What is the purpose of this project?

The aim of this survey is to better understand the current experiences of wellbeing and mental health within University students and to learn more about their experiences of accessing support services, resources and health information. We are also interested to find out whether these experiences are related to loneliness and perceived social support. It is hoped that this information may allow for a greater understanding of difficulties experienced and any protective factors that may help people to cope with the stresses of University study to inform targeted approaches for supporting students in the future.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been invited because you are a student currently studying at universities hosting this study. We hope that up to 5,000 students across all Universities in the UK will take part in this study. Students enrolled at University in undergraduate years 1-6 and postgraduate students are eligible. All full-time, part-time and distance learning postgraduate taught students are eligible to complete the survey (including but not limited to MA, MSc, PGCE, PGCert, PGDip courses, or credits at PGT level).

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without consequence. This survey questionnaire is not a part of your university course and is therefore completely voluntary. Your course providers will not know whether or not you chose to take part.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to complete a consent form and the online survey questionnaire that will take about **10-15 minutes** to complete. The questionnaire will ask about demographic information such as age, gender, level of education, wellbeing, access to support, loneliness and perceived support, any experiences of mental health difficulties you may have had in the past or currently. You do not need to have any of the problems listed above to complete the questionnaires, as we want a wide range of students to take part. You will also have the option to enter for a prize draw to win one of ten, twenty pound (£20) Amazon gift vouchers.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is not anticipated that there are any risks involved in participating in the study. However, if you feel you have been affected by any of the issues in this questionnaire and need to access support or have any questions, please contact **your university Support Services on [Insert Telephone number] or email: [Insert email address]** (or your own GP or NHS 111 services). You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to and you will not be required to discuss your personal information directly with a researcher.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We do not anticipate that there will be any direct benefits from taking part. However, some people find completing the questionnaires interesting and also help them see that others have had similar experiences to them. Your responses will be used to further understanding of current students' experiences of mental health and wellbeing whilst at University with the aim of guiding future approaches to support students.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will only be asked to provide your email address which will be removed from your responses so that you cannot be recognised. Any documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Research department.

We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with data protection law which protect your rights. Data protection regulation requires that we state the legal basis for processing information about you. In the case of research, this is 'a task in the public interest.' Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust is the data controller and is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. All data use is strictly within the terms of the Data Protection Act (DPA, 2018). Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available at: [Privacy Notice](#).

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust is the sponsor for this study based in England. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

The survey will include this participant information sheet detailing all the relevant information regarding the study as well as including a question on consenting to the study right at the beginning.

Your rights to access change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained as this will be anonymous. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible. At the end of the study the anonymous questionnaire data will be kept for up to 15 years, at Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and then will be destroyed.

Data protection regulation provides you with control over your personal data and how it is used. When you agree to your information being used in research, however, some of those rights may be limited in order for the research to be reliable and accurate.

You can find out more about how we use your information at [Privacy Notice](#) or by emailing research@southernhealth.nhs.uk

Will I be reimbursed for taking part?

You will not be reimbursed for taking part, however at the end of the survey you will have the option to enter into a prize draw by providing your email address in order to participate in a prize draw. The email address (if you choose to enter into the prize draw) will be stored separately to the rest of your survey responses to maintain confidentiality. The survey is anonymous and taking part in the draw will maintain anonymity. You will have a chance to win one of 10, twenty pound (£20) Amazon gift vouchers.

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

Participation is voluntary, and you may change your mind as you complete the questionnaire (or before). You have the right to withdraw from taking part in the survey before submitting it. Once you have submitted the completed survey, it will not be possible to withdraw your responses- the survey responses will not include personal details, making it be impossible to identify which survey a certain individual has completed.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data collected during the study will be analysed and written up. The results will be disseminated through publications to peer review journals, and conference presentations. Be assured that you will not be identified in any report or publication. The findings will also be used in the development of future approaches to supporting University students' mental wellbeing. We will make a summary of the results available for participants at the conclusion of the study.

Who is organising and funding the research?

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust alongside the University of Southampton is organising this research which is being funded via the NIHR Senior Investigator Award (RCF).

How have patients and the public been involved in this study?

In designing this study, we have taken into account student and service user opinions on previous similar studies. Former students were consulted on the design of the questionnaire.

Who has reviewed and approved the study?

This study has been reviewed and *approved* by the NHS Health Research Authority (HRA)" ref: 20/HRA/0090. The study has also been reviewed by the University of Southampton Ethics Committee for approval ref: **ERGO II 54097**.

What if there is a problem?

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust as Sponsor has appropriate insurance in place in the unlikely event that you suffer any harm as a direct consequence of your participation in this study.

If you wish to complain about any aspect of the way in which you have been approached or treated, or how your information is handled during the course of this study, you should contact Dr Peter Phiri (contact details below).

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University Ethics Research Governance Office on: rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk

For any questions regarding this study, please contact:

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CONSENT

So that we can be sure you understand the study and would like to take part, please read the following statements and tick the box if you understand and agree with them. Please feel free to contact a member of the research team if you have any questions

Please tick the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s)

1. I have read and understood the information sheet (Version 1.4 dated 07/02/2022) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time for any reason without my participation rights being affected.
3. I understand that by selecting (check) this box in the information and consent form I am giving my consent to taking part in this survey and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.

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Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in the study.