

Participant information sheet

Title: Songs from Home: Developing and testing an online songwriting intervention to tackle loneliness and enhance social connections in order to reduce symptoms of postnatal depression

Date: 17 September 2021

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

The project

The aim of this project is to develop and test an online music activity based on songwriting. The goals of the activity are to tackle loneliness and enhance social connections through musical interactions in order to reduce symptoms of postnatal depression (PND) such as low mood or anxiety.

Why am I being invited to take part?

You are being invited to take part because you are a woman who had a baby in the last 9 months, that you have experienced loneliness and have reported symptoms such as anxiety or depression, and that you are at least 18 years old. As a reminder, only participants with the capacity to consent for themselves are eligible to participate in this study.

What will it involve?

You are invited to participate in a songwriting activity over six weeks. Each week will include an online live session with the activity leader as well as an online workspace for the participants.

You will be asked to fill in a set of online questionnaires three times: once before the workshops begin, once after the final workshop, and once two weeks after the final workshop. In addition, you will be asked to complete a short 3-item questionnaire after each of the six online workshops and two weeks after the final session. You will also be asked general demographic information. Some of the questions on the questionnaire will be compulsory to enable to consistent representation of the data.

After some of the sessions you will be asked some more open and closed questions about how you feel the activity is going, about loneliness and social connection, and about your thoughts about the songwriting activity in general. You will also be asked to let us know your ratings of ideas about the activity.

If you choose to participate in this study, once you have consented, you will be assigned to one of two groups. Half will begin in *September or November [changed depending on workshop assignment]*. The other half will begin in January and you will be asked to complete the questionnaires mentioned above during *September-November/November-December* before you begin the songwriting activity.

At the end of the series of 6-week songwriting activity there will be an optional online focus group discussion with other participants in your songwriting activity group to explore what you thought about the activity and how it can be improved, particularly in relation to issues of loneliness and PND.

The focus groups will be audio and video recorded and the online workspace will be saved. We will debrief the songwriting activity leaders at the end of the series of sessions about how they went and provide them with an overview of feedback from the focus group. This feedback will be anonymous and we will not draw on specific quotes. You will be advised not to record, take screenshots, etc of the session.

You will be sent links to the online sessions, the online workspace, the questionnaires, and the focus group discussion.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide if you want to take part in this research or not. If you don't want to take part, or you change your mind about taking part, having agreed to do so, you won't be penalized in any way. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. You can withdraw either by physically leaving and/or by withdrawing consent for us to use whatever contribution you have already made to the research. Again, you won't be penalized in any way. If you choose to withdraw, at that point you can choose whether data from your involvement to date can be retained or whether it should be destroyed.

What are the benefits of taking part?

We hope that the research will support the development of a new song-writing activity tailor-made for new mothers experiencing loneliness and symptoms of PND. You will also have access to a free 6-week programme of songwriting classes for you and your baby.

Are there any risks?

We do not envisage any risks or lifestyle restrictions from taking part in this project, but the focus group discussion, completion of the questionnaires, and/or the songwriting sessions might lead to reflections about sensitive aspects of your experience of early motherhood. In the event that participation in the research causes any emotional distress, you can seek emotional support from the following sources:

- Your GP, midwife or health visitor
- Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital or call 999
- The Samaritans: 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org. They are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to listen to anything that is upsetting you for free and won't appear on your phone bill).
- PANDAS: 0808 196 1776 (11am-10pm, a source of support specifically for post-natal mental health).
- The charity Mind's pages on postnatal depression and perinatal mental health: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/postnatal-depression-and-perinatal-mental-health/>
- The NHS pages on post-natal depression: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/post-natal-depression/>

If it seems you are having particular trouble coping, the research team will be in contact to offer you the opportunity to speak with a person with lived experience of PND and/or NHS services as you prefer. You will be invited to either contact these people yourself or have help with that contact from one of the researchers on the team. In cases where it seems that you are experiencing significant distress or if you or your baby are at risk, for example as indicated by your responses to any of our questionnaires or in any of the sessions, we will notify your GP and will let you know that we have done so. If immediate threat to your safety or the safety of your baby emerges, the emergency services will be called and your emergency contact alerted. This information will only be kept for the duration of your participation in the study.

Will my information be kept confidential?

If you agree to take part, we will ask you to sign two forms giving informed consent to participate in this project, one of which you will be given to keep. This form will give us permission to collect information about you and provided by you, for the purposes of the present research project only.

Once you sign up to the study, you will be given an identification number so that all the data you provide will be anonymous. All information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential, except in the circumstances explained above, when we might need to share support information with you, contact your GP, call or email your emergency contact, or call the emergency services.

Your contact details will be kept separately from your data, for the purposes of the research. The research is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) UKRI and this study is being led by the Royal College of Music.

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of the project will be published in academic journals and books as well as in other forms (i.e. reports, presentations, websites) in the public domain. You will not be identified by name or other identifying feature in any publication. If you are interested, we can send these results to you once the project is complete.

Storing personal data and information

Any information that you provide for the purposes of the research will be stored securely on a password protected computer for 10 years. If we wish to re-use it within this time period we will seek your permission to do so. At the end of the period it will be destroyed.

The GP and emergency contact information that you provide will only be kept for the duration of your participation in the study and will then be immediately destroyed.

Possible termination of research

If the project has to be terminated for any reason you will be informed and told why. Any information provided by you until the point of termination could still be used for the purposes of the research.

Ethical approval

The CUK Research Ethics Committee (REC) has reviewed this project and granted ethical approval for it to be carried out.

For further information on the study contact:

Rosie Perkins, Neta Spiro, or George Waddell
Centre for Performance Science, Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BS
Emails: rosie.perkins@rcm.ac.uk, neta.spiro@rcm.ac.uk, or george.waddell@rcm.ac.uk

To speak to someone outside the immediate study team or to raise a concern, please contact:

Prof Aaron Williamon (Head of the Centre for Performance Science) Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BS Email: aaron.williamon@rcm.ac.uk

Thank you

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