## GP participant information sheet

**Research project title: Investigating the use of online symptom checkers in general practice from the perspective of older adults and GPs.**

You are being invited to take part in this research study which will be conducted either remotely using the secure video conferencing tool Google Meet, or if Covid circumstances allow, face-to-face. Before you volunteer, it is important that you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and take your time deciding if you would still wish to take part. Please feel free to ask if anything is unclear to you, or if you would like more information.

**What is the purpose of this study?**

This study is led by Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah and forms part of a PhD qualification. The aim of this research project is to explore the use of online symptom checkers such as DoctorLink in general practice from the perspectives of older adults and GPs.

The study particularly focuses on exploring GPs’ perspectives on the potential impacts of online symptom checkers on older adults, and how this may affect the doctor-patient relationship. Exploring these topics in-depth will provide a deeper understanding of the potential usefulness of this technology in general practice from GPs’ perspectives. The findings will also help technology providers and health policy makers improve future design and the implementation of online symptom checkers in general practice.

**Why have I been chosen?**

You have been approached and given information about this study because you may fulfil the inclusion criteria:

* You are on the GMC’s GP Register.
* You have working or have worked in a GP surgery in the past which has made use of the DoctorLink online symptom checker.

In total, there will be approximately 12-16 GPs participating in England.

**Do I have to take part?**

Participation is voluntary. If you decide to take part, you can keep a copy of this information sheet and will be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw from the study at any time, and you can do so without giving a reason.

**What will happen to me if take part? What do I have to do?**

A pre-study online meeting will be arranged, to discuss the details of the study activities including what is expected of you and your participation rights. You will be given every opportunity to ask questions or review any concerns you may have. The project consists of an interview lasting approximately 1 hour discussing aspects such as the advantages and disadvantages of online symptom checker use with older patients, and how the use may impact the doctor-patient relationship from GPs’ perspectives. This will be followed by exploring GPs’ views on some of the wider impacts of the application within the general practice setting.

You may also be contacted to take part in two workshops (lasting 2 hours each) along with other people, such as user experience (UX) designers and older adult participants, to attempt to find solutions to the user experience barriers identified from the interviews. Further information will be provided once you have expressed interest to participate in the workshops.

All information collected during the research will be anonymised, and kept safe following strict data management protocols, as stipulated by Sheffield University ethics guidelines.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Online symptom checkers have the potential to free up GPs’time, allowing more focus on direct patient contact, possibly even enhancing therapeutic interpersonal relationships. They also have the potential to empower older adults and improve access to healthcare services. Although the study may not provide any direct immediate benefitto you as a GP, it is hoped that a greater understanding of how GPs perceive online symptom checkers, alongside your expert knowledge regarding the health needs within older adults in general practice will help influence policy makers and technology providers on the deployment and development of this application as a first point of care.

**What are the possible risks of taking part?**

The study is primarily interested in your perceptions on the use of online symptom checkers in general practice. However, if some personal or sensitive information is revealed indirectly during the interview reflections, please be reassured your confidentiality will be fully respected.

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage of the study, please do not hesitate to contact Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah; his details are provided at the end of this form.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All the information about your participation in this study will be kept confidential. Your name and personal details will be only used for admin purposes during the study by the research team but destroyed once data collection has been completed. If you consent to taking part in this study, the interviews will be recorded on an encrypted audio device. This shall also apply if you consent to taking part in the workshops. Recordings will be promptly removed from the recording device once stored on secure university network in line with the highest standards for data protection. Any paper-based notes will be shredded after being digitised and transferred onto the secure university network. Only the research team will have access to this folder. Any printed transcripts will be promptly shredded after use.

Any information you provide will be handled according to the UK General Data Protection Regulation. Your words may be quoted in publications, reports, webpages, and other research outputs but your name will not be used in these outputs. Where quotes are used, personal details will be changed to make sure you are not identifiable. Your personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to anyone. Research data and related material will be retained for no more than 10 years after the study has been completed.

**What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?**

Under data protection legislation, the legal basis for processing your personal data is that ‘processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest’ (Article 6(1)(e) UK GDPR). Further information can be found in the University’s Privacy Notice https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.’

Some of the data that will be collected is defined in the legislation as a more sensitive special category data (i.e. information about health). The legal basis for processing this type of personal data is that ‘processing is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes’ (Article 9(2)(j) UK GDPR) and our associated condition in law is Schedule 1, Part 1, Paragraph 4 of the Data Protection Act 2018.

**What will happen to the results of this study?**

In addition to informing relevant stakeholders such as health policy makers about the perceptions of GPs regarding online symptom checkers, this data will also be used to suggest design recommendations which are closely aligned with the needs of older adults and likely to improve key aspects of their user experience within the general practice context. You will have access to a summary of the results of the study, if you wish. The results will be published in high quality journals and presented at digital health conferences.

**Who is organizing and funding the study?**

The study is organised by Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah, a postgraduate research student from the University of Sheffield, and is supervised by Professor Mark Hawley and Dr Vita Lanfranchi from the University of Sheffield. The study is self-funded. The study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Sheffield’s School of Health and Related Research Ethics Committee.

**Who is the Data Controller?**

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University will be responsible for your information and for using it properly.

**What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

If you wish to complain please contact Professor Mark Hawley mark.hawley@sheffield.ac.uk. However, if you feel your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, please contact the Dean of School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), Professor Mark Strong (m.strong@sheffield.ac.uk), who will then escalate the complaint through the proper channels. If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, please contact Luke Thompson, The University of Sheffield Data Protection Officer (dataprotection@sheffield.ac.uk). Further information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University’s Privacy Notice: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general. If you feel your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, please contact the Information Commissioner’s Office.

**Contact for further information**

Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah 0781 6466761 ibby.ullah@sheffied.ac.uk

Professor Mark Hawley 0114 222 0682 mark.hawley@sheffield.ac.uk

Dr Vita Lanfranchi 0114 222 1865 v.lanfranchi@sheffield.ac.uk

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## GP participant consent form

**Research project title: Investigating the use of online symptom checkers in general practice from the perspective of older adults.**

**Name of Researcher: Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah Participation Identification Number:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Please tick the appropriate boxes*** | **Yes** | **No** |
| **Taking Part in the Project** |  |  |
| I have read and understood the project information sheet dated [19/11/2021] or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you answer No to this question, please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean) |  |  |
| I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.  |  |  |
| I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project may include being remotely interviewed via the Google Meet video conferencing tool. I understand the interview will be recorded.  |  |  |
| I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study any time; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.  |  |  |
| **How my information will be used during and after the project** |  |  |
| I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project. I understand my identifiable details will be deleted when use is no longer required.  |  |  |
| I understand and agree that small parts of what I say may be quoted anonymously in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs.  |  |  |
| I understand that the recording of the interview will be stored in an access restricted folder on the secure university network in line with the highest standards for data protection and will be retained for no more than 10 years after the study has been completed.  |  |  |
| **So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers** |  |  |
| I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield. |  |  |
| **Optional future research** |  |  |
| I agree to be re-contacted about possible future participation in ideation workshops. |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Name of Participant [printed] | Signature | Date |
|  |  |  |
| Name of Researcher [printed] | Signature | Date |
|  |  |  |

*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant.*

**Project contact details for further information:**

Mohammed Ibrahim Ullah (Lead researcher) 07816466761 ibby.ullah@sheffied.ac.uk

School of Health & Related Research (ScHARR), University of Sheffield, Regent Court, 30 Regent St, Sheffield S1 4DA.

Prof. Professor Mark Hawley (Principal supervisor) 0114 222 0682 mark.hawley@sheffield.ac.uk

Dr. Vita Lanfranchi (Second supervisor) 0114 222 1865

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