

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS:

Supporting Student Mental Health as an Academic

REC Reference Number: LRS-16/17-4345

Dr Nicola Byrom, a lecturer in the Psychology Department at King's College London, and Mr Gareth Hughes, a psychotherapist and researcher at Derby University, are studying the challenges faced by academics in supporting student mental health.

We are aware of the challenges that academics face in supporting student mental health. We are currently inviting academics to discuss these with us, in a semi-structured interview. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

Before you decide whether you want to take part, please take time to read the following information carefully. Please feel free to contact the researchers (Nicola or Gareth) if any points need clarification.

What is the purpose of the study?

Our goal is to understand the current experiences of academics in higher education, in responding to student mental health needs, with a view to developing techniques, resources and/or training to better equip and support academics in future.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are welcome to take part if you are, or have recently been, a personal tutor with experience of supporting students either in an academic or pastoral role.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part. You should read this information sheet and if you have any questions, please ask Nicola or Gareth.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be invited to take part in either a 1-2-1 interview, or **if you prefer**, a small focus group discussion. Please see over the page for further information about taking part in either a 1-2-1 interview or a focus group.

We will be following a semi-structured interview, discussing the following topics:

1. The success you have had or challenges you face in building good relationships with students.
2. How you manage discussions with students about their mental health.
3. Whether student mental health has had any impact on your own wellbeing or work experience.

We will also ask you to complete a short 4-question survey at the start of the interview, reflecting the level of contact you have with students.

Taking part in an interview:

What will happen to me if I take part?

We expect this interview to be completed within 30 minutes. We will record the interview and transcribe this to support our research project.

What are the possible benefits and risks of taking part?

Taking part in this study will help us build an understanding of the challenges faced by personal tutors, supporting the further development of resources and strategies to help personal tutors manage student mental health.

For some, talking about the successes and challenges faced in supporting student mental health can be a positive experience, providing time for reflection. Equally, supporting students can be a stressful experience for some, and discussing this may be stressful.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

Yes. All information will be kept anonymous. We will store transcriptions anonymously. We will take care, where quotes are extracted from interviews, that these do not disclose the identity of the interviewee. Data will be stored surely in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). All information gathered, including audio files, will be stored on password-locked computer files. No data will be able to be linked back to any individual taking part in the study.

Taking part in a focus group:

What will happen to me if I take part?

We expect the focus group to be completed within 60 minutes. We will record the interview and transcribe this to support our research project.

What are the possible benefits and risks of taking part?

Taking part in this study will help us build an understanding of the challenges faced by personal tutors, supporting the further development of resources and strategies to help personal tutors manage student mental health.

For some, talking about the successes and challenges faced in supporting student mental health can be a positive experience, providing time for reflection. Equally, supporting students can be a stressful experience for some, and discussing this may be stressful.

Talking in a focus group, the thoughts you share on this topic will be shared with the other members of the focus group. It is important to consider whether you are happy for your reflections on this topic to be shared with

these colleagues. If you are uncertain, we are happy to run a 1-2-1 interview instead.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

As the researchers, we will keep your information confidential. All information will be kept anonymous. We will store transcriptions anonymously. We will take care, where quotes are extracted from interviews, that these do not disclose the identity of the interviewee. Data will be stored surely in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). All information gathered, including audio files, will be stored on password-locked computer files. No data will be able to be linked back to any individual taking part in the study.

However, we cannot extend this guarantee of confidentiality out to the other members of the focus group. Please be aware that the other members of the focus may decide to discuss or share ideas or thoughts from the focus group.

What will happen to the results of the study?

We will produce a final report summarising the main findings. You are welcome to have a copy of this report. We further plan to disseminate research findings through publication and conferences within the UK.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact Nicola Byrom using the following contact details:
Dr Nicola Byrom, Nicola.byrom@kcl.ac.uk

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this study has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

The Chair, Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery Research Ethics Subcommittee,
rec@kcl.ac.uk

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