University of Central Lancashire
UCLan

Appendix 3

Participant Information Sheet

1. Title of Study

Reducing suicides through digital innovation: An evaluation of the acceptability, effectiveness, and impact of the R;pple suicide prevention tool

2. Invitation to Participate

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before deciding, it is important to understand why this research is being conducted and what it involves. Please read the following information carefully and feel free to ask questions if anything is unclear. You can also discuss this with others, such as friends, family, or your GP. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you should only agree to take part if you feel comfortable doing so.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to evaluate the R;pple suicide prevention tool, which is an internet browser extension designed to intercept harmful online searches related to self-harm and suicide. The tool provides users with supportive messages and links to free mental health services. We aim to understand how acceptable and effective the tool is in reducing self-harm and suicidal thoughts or attempts, and promoting engagement with mental health support services.

This independent research evaluation led by UCLan is part of ongoing efforts to develop innovative, evidence-based strategies for suicide prevention and to inform public health policies worldwide.

4. Why should I take part?

As you have interacted with the R;pple tool while conducting online searches, we aim to gather insights from people such as yourself, to better understand the tool's impact and effectiveness.

5. Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to participate will have no impact on your access to the R;pple tool or other mental health services.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to participate, you will participate in a one-to-one interview (at a time convenient to you) to discuss your experience with the R;pple tool. The interview will last around 60-90 minutes. This could be at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) campus (if you are a UCLan student) or via Microsoft Teams if you are a member of the public. You will be interviewed by a qualified mental health nurse with skills in communication and risk management, who has experience of working with and supporting people who have experienced suicidal thoughts. In the interview we will be asking you to discuss your views and experiences of R;pple. There are no right or wrong answers.

To support your wellbeing during online interviews, it is important that the video remains on throughout the session. This allows the interviewer to observe non-verbal cues and provide appropriate support if needed. With your permission, the interviews will be video recorded. The video recording of the interview, along with a verbatim transcript of what was said, is automatically saved and securely stored on the University's secure server. The transcript, which is a word-for-word record of the interview, will facilitate the research team in conducting a detailed analysis. We may use quotations from your interview in academic publications, reports, presentations and on the R;pple website, but we will use a false name (pseudonym) to protect your identity.

6. How will my data be used and kept confidential?

Your responses will be treated confidentially and securely. Any data you provide will be anonymised and stored securely in compliance with GDPR (data protection) regulations. Data will be retained for 7 years for research purposes and will then be securely destroyed. Anonymised data may be shared with academic or public health organisations for research purposes only. Your participation will not be identifiable in any published reports.

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of 'public task', and in accordance with the University's purpose of "advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit".

7. Are there any risks in taking part?

We recognise that discussing topics related to self-harm or suicide may be distressing for some participants. The interviewer is a qualified mental health nurse with skills in communication and risk management, who understands this and has the experience to support you appropriately during

the interview. If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you are free to stop participating. We will provide information about support services that you can access if needed.

To ensure additional support, we recommend that a trusted contact of yours is present in the same building during the interview, in case of an emergency. We will also request their contact number in case we have sufficient concerns that require us to make contact with them. At the start of the interview, you will also be asked to provide your home address and GP contact details. These details will only be used in the unlikely event of a safety concern arising during the session. Rest assured, this information will be securely deleted 7 days after the interview has concluded.

Prior to commencing any interviewing, you will be asked to confirm if you are able and safe enough to participate in the research at that time. For your safety and comfort during the interview, it is important that the session takes place in a private space where you feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics. Should you disclose any risk of distress during the interview, the interviewer will have national/local support resources to signpost to and may need to contact your GP or local crisis team. Interviews will be discontinued by the interviewer if there is obvious adverse impact.

Please note: This study is not intended for individuals who are currently experiencing a suicidal crisis or are in immediate danger of harming themselves. If you are in urgent need of support, we strongly encourage you to contact a crisis helpline or seek professional assistance immediately. For example, you can reach the Samaritans at 116 123 or contact your local emergency services at 999. Participation in this study is voluntary, and you should only take part if you feel emotionally stable to discuss sensitive topics.

8. Are there any benefits from taking part?

While there are no direct benefits to you for participating, your involvement will help us improve the R;pple tool and contribute to global suicide prevention efforts. Please note that the Microsoft Teams link provided for the interview is for the sole purpose of conducting the session. It is not intended to act as a support mechanism, and if you require further assistance or resources, we will provide information about appropriate services.

9. What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings from this study will be used to enhance the effectiveness of the R;pple tool and may be published in academic journals, on the R;pple website/presentations, presented at conferences. A simple summary of the results will also be available once the results have been written up.

10. What if I want to stop taking part?

You are welcome to withdraw from the interview at any point without giving a reason or without your rights being affected. You may also withdraw from the overall study without having to give any reason, at any point up to a week following the interview. If you withdraw from the study, all data collected will be immediately destroyed. After a week, it will no longer be possible for you to withdraw your responses as they will become anonymised and stored with other anonymised data according to UCLan data requirements.

11. What if I am unhappy or have a problem?

If you have any concerns about the study, please contact Kathryn Gardner *(KJGardner@uclan.ac.uk)*. If you remain dissatisfied, or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with, you can contact the Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit at *OfficerForEthics@uclan.ac.uk*

The research team strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the research team processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dr Kathryn Gardner
University of Central Lancashire
KJGardner@uclan.ac.uk

Thank you for considering participation in this study.

University of Central Lancashire
UCLan

Privacy Notice

How we use your information when we carry out research

This privacy notice gives you some general information about what we will do with your personal information when it is collected by a researcher (staff or student) at UCLan. Where you participate in a study, you will be given a 'Participant Information Sheet' by the researcher; this notice is in addition to the specific information included in that sheet.

Personal information (or personal data) is any information which relates to and identifies you. Data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)) sets out how we should handle your personal information.

Our contact details

The University of Central Lancashire Higher Education Corporation is the data controller for the personal information we process, unless otherwise stated. We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and our registration number is Z5512420.

The Participant Information Sheet will include contact details for the researcher or research team carrying out the study in which you are participating, and **this is who you should contact in the first instance**.

You can also contact the University by phone, email, social media and post.

Our Data Protection Officer

UCLan's Information Governance Manager & Data Protection Officer can be contacted on DPFOIA@uclan.ac.uk. Further information and contact details can be found on our Data Protection web page.

What personal information will we use?

The information we use will depend on the nature of the research in which you are participating. In many cases, it will be clear what information we are using because you will have provided it to us directly – for example, by completing a survey or answering questions in an interview. In other cases, the information may be obtained by observation (e.g. a video or audio recording), or by a third party who collected it for another purpose (e.g. the NHS).

In some cases, we will collect information considered to be particularly sensitive under the GDPR, known as Special Category Data. This is information about your race, ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data used for ID purposes, health, sex life or sexual orientation. As above, it will usually be clear when we are collecting this information because we will have asked you for it.

Please see the Participant Information Sheet for further information about what personal data we will be using in the particular study in which you are participating.

Why do we use your personal data?

As a university, we use personal information to conduct research into a range of different topics with the aim of providing positive social, environmental and economic impacts locally, nationally and internationally. We ensure that any use of personal data for these purposes is in the public interest.

Exactly how we use this data will depend on what is necessary for the specific programme of research in which you are participating. We need to manage your information in specific ways in order for our research to be reliable and accurate. As such, your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, and if you withdraw from a study it is likely that we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum amount of personal information possible.

Please see the Participant Information Sheet for further information about how and why we use your personal data, and what will happen if you withdraw from a study.

What is the lawful basis for this processing?

The University relies on the following legal bases from the GDPR and the DPA to process information about you for the purposes set out in this notice:

GDPR Article 6(1)(e), which allows us to process personal data where it is necessary to perform a task in the public interest. As a Higher Education institution, one of our tasks (set out in Section 123A of the Education Reform Act 1988) is carrying out and publishing research.

GDPR Article 9(2)(j), which allows us to process special category data for archiving, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes, where there is a basis to do so in law. The law which allows us to rely on this basis is section 10 of the DPA by virtue of Schedule 1(4).

In certain circumstances, we may rely on your consent to process your information. In these cases, Article 6(1)(a) applies, and Article 9(2)(a) applies where the information is Special Category Data (see above). It will be clear where we are relying on your consent to collect and use your information because we will explicitly request it. However, **please be aware that consent to participate in research is not the same as consent to use your data**. Even where we have asked for your consent to participate, any processing of your personal data is usually carried out as part of our 'public task' (described above), meaning you will have the right to withdraw from further participation in the study, but your right to stop us using any of your data we have already obtained for our research purposes may be limited.

In the cases where we do need your consent to process your information, we will explain (in the Participant Information Sheet) why we are asking for the information and how we will use it if you choose to provide it. Your consent can be withdrawn at any time and we will explain how you can do this in each individual case.

Who will my personal information be shared with?

We sometimes share your information with external organisations and bodies which process data on our behalf, such as transcription services and hosting providers. We have contracts in place with our data processors which ensure that they hold your data securely, only retain it for as long as we instruct, and cannot do anything with it unless we have instructed them to do so.

We may also share your personal data with our research partners who are working with us on all or part of the piece of research.

Please see the Participant Information Sheet for specific information about who your data will be shared with.

Sending your information outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

Occasionally we may need to send your personal information outside the EEA (e.g. if we are working with partner institutions in other countries). All transfers are carried out with appropriate safeguards in place to protect your information and ensure it remains secure.

Please see the Participant Information Sheet for further information about whether your data will be transferred internationally, and what safeguards are in place in such cases.

How long will we keep your personal information?

Research data could be retained for any length of time, depending on the requirements of the research, and in many cases may be retained indefinitely. The Participant Information Sheet will advise you in each specific case how long we intend to retain your data.

Your data protection rights

Under data protection law, you have rights we need to make you aware of. The rights available to you depend on our reason for processing your information. Further information about each of these rights can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website.

Your right of access

You have the right to ask us for copies of your personal information. This right always applies. There are some exemptions, which means you may not always receive all the information we process. For further information or to make a request, please see our Data Protection web page.

Your right to rectification

You have the right to ask us to rectify information you think is inaccurate. You also have the right to ask us to complete information you think is incomplete. This right always applies.

Your right to erasure

You have the right to ask us to erase your personal information in certain circumstances.

Your right to restriction of processing

You have the right to ask us to restrict the processing of your information in certain circumstances.

Your right to object to processing

You have the right to object to any processing we carry out, if we carry it out on the basis that it forms part of our public task or is in our legitimate interests. You also have the right to object to your personal information being used for direct marketing purposes.

Your right to data portability

This only applies to information you have given us. You have the right to ask that we transfer the information you gave us from one organisation to another or give it to you. The right only applies if we are processing information because we have your consent or because you have a contract with us and it is necessary for the performance of that contract, and the processing is automated.

Your right to complain

We work to high standards when it comes to processing your personal information. If you have queries or concerns, please contact the Information Governance Manager & Data Protection Officer, and we will respond.

If you remain dissatisfied, you can make a complaint about the way we process your personal information to the Information Commissioner's Office, which is the UK supervisory authority for data protection. Further information can be found on our Data Protection webpage.