

## Interview Participant Information Sheet

**Researcher:** Lillian Starling

I am currently undertaking the Psychology Honours program in the School of Medicine and Psychology at the Australian National University. I am working under my research supervisor, Dr Brett Scholz, who is a Senior Research Fellow and Senior Lecturer in the School of Medicine and Psychology at the Australian National University.

**Project Title:** Mental Health Consumer Attitudes Toward Practitioner Lived Experience

### General Outline of the Project:

- **Description and Methodology:** This study aims to explore the attitudes of mental health consumers towards mental health practitioners with personal or “lived” experience (that is, first-hand personal experience) of a psychological illness. This study seeks to explore consumer perspectives regarding mental health practitioners who are specifically either a registered Psychologist or Psychiatrist. The mental health consumers of interest include individuals who have previously accessed or currently access mental health support via consultation with a registered Psychologist or Psychiatrist. Practitioner lived experience of mental illness involves the first-hand understanding of psychological ill-health following an episode or occurrence of mental illness, ranging across the full spectrum of mental health challenges, from occasional concerns to the diagnosis of more chronic illnesses. Should you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked a series of questions relating to your perspectives on Psychologists and Psychiatrists with lived-experience/s of mental illness either through an online survey platform or interview, depending on your preference. This document is the participant information sheet for those would wish to complete an interview. Interviews will be offered virtually (via Zoom) or in-person to optimise your comfort and will be recorded and then transcribed. For those participating via interview on Zoom, you may wish to have your camera on for the interview. Zoom automatically video-records this, so you may choose to turn off your camera if you do not wish to be video-recorded.
- **Participants:** Responses will be collected from approximately ten interview participants who identify as having previously accessed or currently accessing Psychological or Psychiatric services. The small interview sample size aims to give you ample time and space to respond and will provide the researcher with a deep and rich data set. This includes individuals who have either privately sought support from these mental health professionals or accessed them via a referral from a General Practitioner, perhaps through a Medicare ‘Mental Health Treatment Plan’. Individuals who have seen a Psychologist or Psychiatrist for any number of sessions are welcome to participate. Participants must be over the age of 18.
- **Use of Data and Feedback:** Your responses will be analysed with other participant responses to form the investigation for a Psychology Honours thesis. Findings may be presented at academic and/or health conferences and may be published in academic journals. Your responses will be de-identified and accessed in full by only the researcher and supervisor. There is a chance that some of your responses may be re-identifiable (recognisable) to the researcher and supervisor given the small number of people completing interviews. Excerpts may be included in the thesis, with all identifying details removed. A summary of the study’s results will be available upon its completion in November 2023 via the website through which you accessed the study ([here](#)).

- **Project Funding:** The School of Health and Medicine provides some limited funding to Psychology Honours students. All participants who participate via interview will be remunerated with a \$20 Coles Group voucher, regardless of if the participant chooses to withdraw after commencing the interview.

### Participant Involvement:

- **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal:** Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your participation at any stage without explanation. Responses to questions are also voluntary, and you have the right to choose not to respond to any particular question asked by the researcher without explanation. Once interview responses have been transcribed (approximately two weeks after the final interview), they will be returned to participants via email for a one-week correction period in which you will have the opportunity to review your responses and ensure the transcription is accurate. If you change your mind and wish to withdraw from the study after your interview, you can email the researcher or supervisor before the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2023, informing us of your desire to withdraw with no explanation needed, and your responses will be destroyed and not included in the current research. If you do choose to provide a reason you're your withdrawal, this information will not be used or included in the study in any way. Withdrawal can be done up until the time that the data is analysed and being written up for submission (28<sup>th</sup> of August 2023).
- **What does participation in the research entail?** Should you choose to participate in this study, you will complete an interview with the researcher (and potentially also the supervisor, with your consent). Interviews will go for between 30-60 minutes and will consist of approximately 8-10 questions. Questions will explore your attitudes regarding mental health practitioners who have lived experience/s of mental illness, such as '*how would you feel if a mental health practitioner referred to their own experience of mental illness in working with you?*'. Questions will not ask about your personal experiences of mental illness, but you may choose to include this information in your responses where relevant. With your consent, responses will be recorded through an audio recording device, from which they will be transcribed. For those participating via interview on Zoom, you may wish to have your camera on for the interview. Zoom automatically video-records this, so you may choose to turn off your camera if you do not wish to be video-recorded. Your recording will only be made available to the researcher and supervisor. Transcribed responses will be analysed and inform the basis of the thesis.
- **Location and Duration:** Should you choose to complete an interview, you will have the option to complete it online (via Zoom) or alternatively in-person at the Australian National University campus in New Acton, Canberra (unless otherwise arranged). Interviews may be conducted by the researcher alone or additionally in the presence of the supervisor, as directed by your preference to ensure your comfort. Interviews are anticipated to take between approximately 30-60 minutes.
- **Remuneration:** The School of Health and Medicine at the Australian National University provides some limited funding to Psychology Honours students. All participants who participate via interview will be remunerated with a \$20 Coles Group voucher, regardless of if the participant chooses to withdraw after commencing the interview.
- **Risks:** While this study does not specifically investigate your personal experiences in Psychological or Psychiatric consultations, you may feel that they are relevant in responding to some of the questions. There is a risk that this may provide some discomfort for participants. To minimise any potential distress, the study's questions have been designed to be open-ended, allowing you to draw on any examples you may like to or choose not to provide this kind of information. You also may choose not to

answer a question at all, stop answering a question after commencing it, or withdraw from the study entirely at any time. Withdrawal is possible at any stage of the study, including after your responses have been submitted and transcribed. Should participants wish, they may also choose to have certain sections of the transcript removed if, for example, they are not happy with the way they responded to a question or decide they are not comfortable having this included in the study. Given the thesis is submitted October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, participants are welcome to request the exclusion of a response up until the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2023. There is also a low risk that you may be able to be identified from your contribution to this study. To avoid this, all identifying details such as names (unless you choose otherwise on your consent form), locations in which mental health services were accessed, as well as identifying particularities about any consultation experiences will be removed from your responses. To avoid third-party identification, it is recommended that you avoid disclosing information that is confidential, defamatory or that could otherwise harm you or others. If you do experience any discomfort or distress in participating in this study, please find support services included at the bottom of this form. You are also welcome to contact the researcher or supervisor at any time to receive additional information about available support services.

- **Benefits:** While it is unlikely that you will personally directly benefit from this study, its findings may lead to the improvement of mental health services available to those struggling with mental illnesses by better capturing what consumers appreciate in these settings. We hope that through greater understanding the role of practitioner lived experience, we can improve consumer experiences with these services and better support practitioners working in the mental health field.
- **Implications of participation:** Given participant recruitment is being conducted via Facebook community groups and Psychology/Psychiatry practice reception desks, there is a chance that existing social networks may be underlying participants. Thus, there is a chance that you may have been referred to complete this study by a friend. Your choice to participate in this research is entirely voluntary. Participation in this study is not an expectation of your employment, professional relationship, association with the research team, or any other party and your choice will not affect your relationship with any party.

#### Exclusion criteria:

- **Participant Limitation:** Subjects will be excluded from the study if they have accessed or are currently accessing mental health support from a Psychologist or Psychiatrist who self-identifies as a “lived-experience” practitioner, and this is their only experience with Psychologists and/or Psychiatrists.

#### Confidentiality:

- **Confidentiality:** Confidentiality will be protected as far as the law allows. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the responses provided as a part of this study. Audio files and transcripts will be stored securely and in a de-identified format, with participant names being replaced by titles such as “Participant 1” (unless you choose otherwise on your consent form). A transcription service may be utilised to assist in this process. There is a chance that participants completing the interview form of participation may be re-identifiable to the researcher and supervisor given the small number of interviews that will be conducted. That is, the researcher may recall specific responses from interviewing those individuals. For those participating via interview on Zoom, you may wish to have your camera on for the interview. Zoom automatically video-records this, so you may wish to turn off your camera if you do not wish to be video-recorded. Deidentified titles (e.g. “Participant 1”) will be

used when referring to individual participants in the thesis, and if excerpts from responses are included, any other identifying details will be removed.

### Privacy Notice:

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_010007](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007) and it contains information about how a person can:

- Access or seek correction to their personal information;
- Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

### Data Storage:

- **Where:** Physical consent forms will be scanned and destroyed. These scanned copies will be stored in a password protected ANU OneDrive folder. Audio files and transcripts will also be stored in this ANU OneDrive folder. Audio recordings may be temporarily stored on a transcription platform before being processed and transferred to the ANU OneDrive folder, and then destroyed from any databases associated with the transcription service. Only the researcher and supervisor will have access to this folder. Consent forms and de-identified electronic files will be kept on file for at least five years from the date of any publication arising from the research. Electronic data may be archived or retained in a de-identified format at the School of Medicine and Psychology, in accordance with guidelines for storing and retaining data. This de-identified data may potentially be used in future research.
- **Handling of Data following the required storage period:** Electronic data may be archived or retained in a de-identified format at the School of Medicine and Psychology for at least five years, in accordance with guidelines for storing and retaining data.

### Queries and Concerns:

- **Contact Details for More Information:** If you have any further questions or concerns regarding the study, please contact the researcher, Lillian Starling, at [lillian.starling@anu.edu.au](mailto:lillian.starling@anu.edu.au) or by phone on the supervisor, Dr Brett Scholz, at [brett.scholz@anu.edu.au](mailto:brett.scholz@anu.edu.au).
- **Contact Details if in Distress:** If you feel any distress or discomfort from participating in any part of this study, please contact any of the support services listed below or either of the researchers, who can provide you with further information.

**Lifeline Canberra**  
24-hour crisis support line  
Phone: 13 11 14

**ANU Counselling Centre**  
(participants affiliated with the ANU)  
Phone: (02) 6125 2442

### Ethics Committee Clearance:

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2023/174). If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University



Australian  
National  
University

Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427

Email: [Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au](mailto:Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au)