University of Sussex

Health inequalities & tackling antimicrobial resistance in sexual health

A study of antibiotic treatment and experiences of bacterial infection

Name of Researchers: Dr Catherine Will and Dr Ulla McKnight

You are invited to take part in a research study. The study is sponsored by the University of Sussex and funded by the Wellcome Trust.

The research aims to better understand how patients and health care practitioners' talk about antibiotics and treat bacterial infections in different clinics and how both groups feel about care, medicines and infections. The researchers will use the information they collect to help health care practitioners meet their patients' needs and treat bacterial infections.

A researcher would like to observe your daily activities, including medical consultations with patients. The researcher will leave the room if you conduct a physical examination. The researcher will write notes about the things she observes. This information will be used to come up with better ways to talk about and treat bacterial infections.

You might also be invited to be interviewed by a researcher. The researcher does not have set questions. Instead the researcher would like to chat with you about your experiences in the clinic, your feelings about the medical care you provide, current policy guidelines, bacterial infections and antibiotics. The interviews will be used to help the researchers understand these issues from a medical care providers point of view. If you agree to be interviewed, and if the interview takes place during your shift, your clinic will be able to claim to cover the costs of bank staff for the time it takes you. If the interview takes place outside of your normal working hours, you will be given a voucher as compensation for your time.

In this research study we will use information from you. We will only use information that we need for the research study. If you agree to take part, we will let very few people know your name, and only if they really need it for this study. Everyone involved in this study will keep your data safe and secure. We will also follow all privacy rules. At the end of the study we will save some of the data in case we need to check it. We will make sure no-one can work out who you are from the reports we write. The information pack tells you more about this.

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Why are we doing the study?

Health care practitioners need to think carefully about how they prescribe antibiotics to their patients. This is because certain infections are becoming resistant to available antibiotics. The aim of this study is to explore how this can be done without worsening health inequalities, for example if patients are put off accessing clinical care or suffer stigma associated with bacterial infections. As part of the project we are looking at the way clinical staff respond to these infections and patient experiences of these infections and their treatment.

The study will take three years to complete and is being led by Dr Catherine Will at the University of Sussex, as part of a larger project funded by the Wellcome Trust. During this time, the researchers will spend several months observing clinical practice in a number of different locations. The researchers will also interview patients and members of health care teams. We will compare what members of the care teams in different clinics do and explore patients' and care team members' experiences.

All research in the NHS is reviewed by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee which is there to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. This project has been reviewed and was given a favourable review by the London - Brighton and Sussex NHS Research Ethics Committee and the University's Sponsorship Sub-Committee (SSC), as well as by experts in social science, a lay review panel and patient representatives.

Why am I being asked to take part?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you are a member of the sexual health services team at a participating clinic. We are also inviting patients to participate in this study.

What will I need to do if I take part?

If you choose to do so there are two ways of taking part in this study:

<u>Observing your daily activities</u>

If you consent to be part of this project, a researcher would like to observe your daily activities, including medical consultations with patients. The researcher will leave the room during physical examinations. We will be informing all patients about the study in the waiting area outside the consultations, with posters and flyers. Patients with pre-booked appointments will receive information about the study in a text message. We are asking you to ask your patient for permission to introduce them to the researcher, give them further information if they have questions and hand over to the researcher for questions that you cannot answer. The researcher does not require and will not have access to patients' medical records.

Being interviewed

You are also invited to be interviewed by the researcher. If you are happy to be interviewed, you and the researcher will decide upon a mutually agreeable time and private place (usually within the clinic – but she can arrange a room elsewhere if you prefer). The researcher will go over this Participant Information Sheet with you. The researcher will answer any questions you might have. If you are happy to proceed, the researcher will ask you to sign a consent form. You will be given a copy of this sheet and the consent form. The interviews will be semi-structured meaning that the researcher does not have a fixed set of questions. During the interview the researcher will ask questions about your work and your experiences in the clinic. The interview will last for about one hour and will be similar to a conversation between you and the researcher. You do not have to answer any questions you would prefer not to. The researcher would like to record the interviews – but she can take notes if you prefer. We would like to publish anonymised quotations from interviews. In exceptional circumstances for example where your safety or the safety of others seems at risk, the researcher will be required to pass any concerns onto safeguarding staff at the clinic.

If you would like to take part in the study you can let your team leader know and/or you can contact the researcher directly. Taking part in this study, or refusal to take part or answer any questions, will have no effect on, and is in no way related to, your employment at the Trust.

More information about taking part

Compensation

If you agree to be interviewed and the interview takes place outside of your working hours you will be compensated for your time with a voucher worth £20. If the interview takes place during your working hours the clinic will be able to claim to cover the costs of bank staff for the time it takes you.

Possible disadvantages

It is possible that members of the healthcare teams will worry that we will not be able to ensure their anonymity. As described below we will remove names and identifying features from data before including any in publications. The inclusion of different clinics in the UK will reduce the possibility of individual members of care teams being able to identify their colleagues in any material published as a result of this study.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time up to two months after you have taken part, without giving a reason. If so we will destroy transcripts of interviews with you, but we will need to keep a record of your name, participation and withdrawal.
- We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means we are not able to let you change the data we hold about you.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how health researchers use the data they collect from the Health Research Authority at www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/ or the leaflet available from www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch.

You can also find out more about the issue in this specific study by asking one of the research team, or by contacting the University of Sussex Data Protection Officer by email at dpo@sussex.ac.uk, or by phone on 01273 678472.

How we use information about you

We will need to use information from you for this research project.

If you agree to be interviewed, the information we keep will include your name. People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name. Your data will have a code number instead.

We will keep all information about you safe and secure.

Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

The information collected for this study will be used to write academic pieces including conference papers and articles, as well as reports and training material for clinical staff and policy makers. All of these will be made available on the project's website where you can sign up for direct updates and news of events. We will also post information about the project on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter [insert addresses].

How to contact us?

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this study you could talk to the researchers who work on the project – Dr Ulla McKnight or Dr Catherine Will – or to Dr Achyuta Nori or Dr Suneeta Soni who are co-investigators on the research. If you would like to talk to someone outside the project you could contact Antony Walsh, the Research Governance Officer at the University of Sussex (see contact details below).

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Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet!

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