

## **Health inequalities & tackling antimicrobial resistance in sexual health**

### **A study of antibiotic treatment and experiences of bacterial infection**

**Name of Researchers: Dr Catherine Will, Dr Ulla McKnight and Professor Bobbie Farsides**

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.

You are invited to be interviewed virtually 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.

### **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 and Professor Bobbie Farsides 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?**

#### Being interviewed

You are invited to be interviewed by the researcher. If you are happy to be interviewed, you will be asked to confirm that you have listened to or read all the information in the video/text. You can phone or email the researcher so that she can answer any questions you might have. After that you will be asked to pick a time that works for you. We will send a text or email with a link to the interview which will take place on a digital platform (either Microsoft Teams, University of Sussex Zoom, Skype for business)<sup>1</sup>. We will also send you a reminder shortly before the interview. The researcher will ask you if you consent to take part in the

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<sup>1</sup> More information about the privacy and security provided on this platform can be found here: [https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/privacy-and-security.html?zcid=3747&creative=431306240825&keyword=zoom%20security&matchtype=p&network=g&device=c&gclid=EAlaIqObChMI2uudgNzK6gIVwbTtCh2kUw0\\_EAAYASAAEgLbq\\_D\\_BwE](https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/privacy-and-security.html?zcid=3747&creative=431306240825&keyword=zoom%20security&matchtype=p&network=g&device=c&gclid=EAlaIqObChMI2uudgNzK6gIVwbTtCh2kUw0_EAAYASAAEgLbq_D_BwE)  
<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/security-compliance-overview>  
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/privacy-supplement-for-microsoft-skype-for-business-f2100fe5-20f2-4f87-a986-2a823b013b41>

research before the interview starts and will of course be happy to answer any additional questions you might have.

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. Any recording will take place using a password protected device belonging to the researcher (not the platform provider) and stored securely. 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.

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. We will email or text the voucher to you after the interview. 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/](http://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/) or the leaflet available from [www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch](http://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](mailto:dpo@sussex.ac.uk). More information is available from the University here: <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/website/privacy-and-cookies/privacy>.

## **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 (please see website for details [www.marginalisationandthemicrobe.org](http://www.marginalisationandthemicrobe.org)).

### **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, Dr Catherine Will or Professor Bobbie Farsides – or to Professor Jane Anderson, Dr Achyuta Nori or Dr Suneeta Soni, Dr Susanna Currie, Dr Vendela McNamara and Dr Chantal Oxenham 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 details below).

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

**28<sup>th</sup> April  
2021**