

**Participant Information Sheet**

**Understanding the experiences of older adults using technology to stay connected: A facilitator or creator of new vulnerabilities?**

You have been invited to be part of a study exploring experiences of using technology to stay connected to others. Before deciding if you would like to be involved in this project it is important that you understand why it is taking place and what it would mean for you. Please take the time to read this information. If you have any questions you are encouraged to speak to a member of the research team (contact details at the end of this document).

**What is the purpose of this study?**

This study aims to explore experiences of using technology (including social media) to connect with others. Specifically, this study aims to:

* Understand reasons for initiation of the use of technology to communicate with others
* Map the facilitators and barriers of using these technologies in terms of how they create new capabilities and vulnerabilities for older people.
* Understand motivations for, and experiences of, using technology for social connection.
* Determine changes in perceived social participation, social isolation, and loneliness.

**Who is carrying out this study?**

Researchers at Northumbria University and Swansea University are carrying out this study.

**Why have I been invited to participate?**

You have been invited to participate in this study as you are an individual, over 65 years old, currently using technology and/or social media to connect with others. We would value your perspective and expertise about the topic.

**Do I have to take part?**

No. It is up to you whether you wish to take part in the study. This information sheet will help inform that decision, and you are encouraged to discuss participation with others. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw from the study at any point, without disclosing why.

**What will this mean for me if I choose to participate?**

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview which can be carried out face-to-face in a location most convenient for you, over the telephone, or via skype. The interviews may take up to an hour to complete. All interviews will be recorded using a Dictaphone.

**Will information collected in this study be kept confidential and anonymous?**

All information collected in this study will be entirely anonymous and unidentifiable. No individual information will be reported. Only the research team will have access to this documentation.

**What will happen to my results?**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will inform the research evidence base. The findings will also be reported in a scientific journal or presented at a research conference. Once more, it is important to note that all information will be anonymous and unidentifiable.

**How will my data be stored and how long will it be stored for?**

Audio data will be destroyed once typed up. Your consent form will be kept in locked storage within Northumbria University. All electronic data; including the recordings from your interview, will be stored on a password protected computer. All data will be stored in accordance with NHS and University guidelines and GDPR. All documentation will be destroyed 3 years after project completion.

**What is the legal basis for processing personal data?**

The legal basis for processing the personal data required for the purposes of this study is that the research is being conducted in the public interest.

What categories of personal data will be collected and processed in this study?

We will record your age and gender. Otherwise, only information provided during interviews will be collected within this study.

Who are the recipients or categories of recipients of personal data, if any?

Only member of the research team at Northumbria University will see this data.

**What happens if I decide I want to be involved in the *podcast*?**

A podcast is a digital audio file which will be recorded and available for downloading from the internet. The **podcasts are separate to the research project,** and it is entirely your choice if you would like to be involved. You can be involved in these podcasts in two ways. Firstly, voice clips recorded from the interview will be used for one podcast. These will be entirely non-identifiable, and will only be used after your permission. Secondly, you may be invited to come into Northumbria University to record a podcast and re-tell your story and experiences again. Once more, this is separate from the research project, and we completely understand if you do not want to be involved in this.

**What are my rights as a participant in this study?**

You have a right to access a copy of the information comprised in your personal data (to do so individuals should submit a [Subject Access Request](https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/leadership-governance/vice-chancellors-office/legal-services-team/northumbria-data-protection/subject-access-requests/)); a right in certain circumstances to have inaccurate personal data rectified; and a right to object to decisions being taken by automated means. If you are dissatisfied with the University’s processing of personal data, they have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office. For more information see [the ICO website](http://www.ico.org.uk/).

**Who has reviewed this study?**

This study has been approved by Northumbria University’s Faculty of Health and Life Sciences ethics committee (Ref: 12734).

**Contact details for further information:**

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**If you would like independent information about this project, please contact:**

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