**LOASCA: Lgbtq+ Older Adult Social Care Assessment study**

*A research project at the University of Birmingham*

*in collaboration with Universities of Bristol and Manchester, and Opening Doors*

*Funded by the NIHR School for Social Care Research*

**INFORMATION SHEET (Service Users)**

**What is the research about?**

This research project is about the social care experiences of older LGBTQ+ adults and how assessments engage with sexual orientation and gender identity. We are interested in hearing from anyone who

1. Identifies as LGBTQ+, meaning lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or another gender or sexual minority.
2. Has received a social care assessment from their local council.
3. Is 65+ years old.

Because of earlier research and talking to older LGBTQ+ people, we know that many older LGBTQ+ people experience difficulties when trying to access social care and are often anxious about discrimination or abuse because of their sexual or gender identity. Our aim is to understand how LGBTQ+ people experience the social care assessment process and wider social care services.

**What does participating involve?**

If you choose to take part, you will be part of a group discussion with about eight people who also fit the above description. The focus groups will discuss ageing and social care needs. We will ask you to discuss your experiences of social care assessments with each other, as well as your thoughts on how sexual orientation and gender identity can be sensitively asked about and supported by social care organisations. These will take place at a location convenient for all group members. We will arrange a time best suited to those taking part. The focus groups will last approximately 1.5 hours (including time to sign the consent forms and ask any last questions you have, as well as breaks). We will also ask you to complete a brief questionnaire about yourself, though you do not have to complete this if you do not want to. Taking part in a focus group is voluntary and you can withdraw from the project at any time.

If you would rather not be in a focus group, but still would be interested in sharing your experiences, we can arrange an individual interview. If you would prefer your carer or significant other to be present for that interview, we can facilitate that.

If you participate in this project, you will get a £20 voucher as a compensation for your time.

Focus groups (or interview) will be transcribed in full by a transcriber approved by University of Birmingham. We will use these transcriptions alongside other data we are gathering from your council, and other councils in England, including interviews with other social care workers at those councils, and focus groups with older LGBTQ+ people (we plan to run focus groups/interviews with 24 service users total). We will identify key themes relevant to improving social care assessments for older LGBTQ+ people, including what is working well and where there are particular problems that require addressing.

We will communicate the findings and key messages to older LGBTQ+ people, social care services and social care workers through published reports, conference presentations and webinars. These will include a webinar for your local councilto help them improve their specific service. If you want to hear more about the study after the focus groups, we can post or email you a short summary of the research findings if you wish. It is our hope that messages from the research will help provide better social care for older LGBTQ+ people.

**Are there any risks in taking part?**

It can sometimes be hard to discuss topics like social care needs or your experiences as an LGBTQ+ person, as these can relate to negative experiences you have had in life. We have thought hard about ways of asking questions in a sensitive and supportive way and developed these with the help of older LGBTQ+ people who have experience of social care. However, if it becomes too difficult to discuss, you can always take breaks during focus groups and interviews or you can stop completely at any time. We can also provide you with lists of services local to your area that provide social support, some of these you may not be aware of.

**Confidentiality**

Everything you say during the focus group (or interview) will be confidential. We will not tell anyone that you have taken part, though if you take part in the focus group another member of the group could recognise you. Other focus group participants will, of course, hear what you say in the focus group, and you will hear what they say. All participants in the focus group are asked to respect each other’s confidentiality and not to use each other’s real names during the recording.

The only exception to this is if you tell us something that suggests you, or someone else, is at risk of harm. If that happens, we will need to share this information with others and we will tell you if we need to do this.

Your name, and anything else that might identify you, will not be used in any dissemination activity. We may use direct quotes from the focus group (or interview), but we will use a pseudonym (and you can help us choose one for you). Or if you prefer, you can take part but withhold your agreement for direct quotes to be used.

Any personal identifiable information (e.g., name and contact details) will be kept up to the end of the project, which we expect to be October 2023, and then destroyed. Anonymised focus group and interview transcripts will be securely stored and may be used for other future research purposes but only by members of the same research team. It will not be shared with anyone else.

**How will we use information about you?**

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

This information will include your name and contact details. The research team will be the only people able to access these details. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. 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 identify that you took part in the study.

**What are your choices about how your information is used?**

* You can stop being part of the study at any time during the data collection process which ends on 1st January 2023, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.
* We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won’t be able to let you see or 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 we use your information

* at [www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/)
* our leaflet available from [www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch](http://www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch)
* by asking one of the research team
* by sending an email to dataprotection@contacts.bham.ac.uk, or

by ringing us on +44 (0)121 414 3916.

**What do I do next?**

Taking part is voluntary.

* **If you don’t want to take part,** you don’t have to do anything. You may receive one more reminder about the study, but the research team do not have your personal details and will not contact you directly.
* **If you do want to take part**, please get in touch with the research team by emailing Dr Dora Jandric, the research fellow on the project, on d.jandric@bham.ac.uk
* **If you would like further information before you decide,** please contactDr Jason Schaub. Jason is leading the study and would be happy to answer your questions.

**Dr Jason Schaub, Lecturer in Social Work,**

**Department of Social Work and Social Care**

**Muirhead Tower**

**University of Birmingham**

**Edgbaston, Birmingham**

**B15 2TT, United Kingdom**

**Email:** **j.schaub@bham.ac.uk**

*The study is being conducted by researchers at University of Birmingham, University of Bristol, University of Manchester, and Opening Doors. It is funded by the National Institute for Health Research School for Social Care Research. The study has received ethical approval from The Social Care Research Ethics Committee (22/IEC08/0007). If you have any concerns or complaints about this study and would like to speak to an independent person who is not a member of the research team, contact the University of Birmingham Research Governance Office at* *researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk*

**Thank you for reading this information.**