

Domestic Violence Programme Research Project

Information Sheet for Men

You are invited to take part in our research project. Before you decide we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you.

Please read this information sheet carefully to decide whether you wish to take part. One of our team will go through this information sheet with you and answer any questions you have. Please ask us if anything is not clear. You can take your time to decide and to speak to others (including your programme facilitator) if you wish.

Why are we doing this research project?

We are doing this research to find out if and how men's programmes and women's support services improve the lives of men, women and children who experience domestic violence. We want to find out what does work and what does not work so that we can help to make services better in the future.

Who is doing this research?

A team of researchers from three universities: London Metropolitan University, Durham University and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine are doing the research. This research has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Northern Rock Foundation. This means that it is an independent piece of academic research. The researchers in the Durham University team that you are most likely to meet are called Richard and Julia and they are led by Nicole Westmarland.

Why have I been asked to take part?

You have been asked to take part because we would like to ask you about your views of the programme that you have attended. The interview you have been asked to take part in will discuss your experiences of being a man, personal relationships, family life and the programme. You are the best person to discuss these issues.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you if you take part. If you choose not to take part it won't make any difference to the help you get from the programme.

If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form to show that you agree to take part in the research project.

If you do agree to take part and then change your mind at any time later you can stop taking part. All you need to do is tell the researcher that you no longer want to take part. If you do not wish for us to keep any information you have told us we will make sure it is destroyed.

What will I have to do?

If you decide to take part, we will ask you to sign a consent form and be interviewed on two separate occasions. The first interview would be carried out close to you beginning on the programme. The second interview would be carried out when you leave the programme. Each interview is expected to last around an hour and a half and will be carried out by one of our researchers. This discussion will be audio-recorded. We will ensure that the discussion takes place at a time and place convenient to you. All interviews will take place in a private room within the service that you normally go to when you attend the programme. They can be organised to fit in before or after you attend your programme. Alternatively you can ask to be interviewed by phone.

One section of the interview asks you to talk about 4 - 6 situations that have happened to you in your own words. All these examples should draw on your relationship with the partner or ex-partner who you were referred to the programme for. The researcher will ask you to talk about things such as; a time when you and your partner or ex-partner disagreed with each other; a time when you used or threatened to use violence against her and how your violence or abuse has affected others.

The researcher will ask you to describe what happened before, during and after the incident and consider what was said, what was done, how you felt and what you were thinking. The researcher can help you to think of good examples of situations but it may be useful to think of the most important examples from this relationship in advance. Feel free to bring notes to help you with this if you wish.

The rest of the interview allows you to discuss your experiences of the support you have had so far, including whether you feel that your relationship, children, you and/or your partner or ex-partner have changed.

Do I have to answer every question?

No. By taking part in this interview you do not have to answer all of the questions. If you are uncomfortable or do not want to answer any of the questions just let the researcher know and the question can be skipped.

Will I be named in the research?

No. All identifiable information (e.g. names, location and family make-up) will be changed: this means that what you say is anonymised. No one taking part will be named or identified in any reports or publications that the research team later produce. Any identifiable information about you including contact details needed to arrange the interview will only be seen by authorised persons within the research team.

What will happen to the audio-recording of the conversation?

Only the research team (including researchers, administrators and transcribers) will have access to, and be able to listen to, the audio-recording of the discussion. A member of the research team will write up what has been said into a transcript and only the researchers will have access to this. All information will be kept on secure, password-protected computers and in locked filing cabinets in locked offices at Durham University. You can have a copy of the transcript. The audio-recording will be destroyed at the end of the research project. The identity of participants will remain confidential.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

An anonymised summary of research will be shared with the programme. The anonymised information may be used for publications and educational purposes. If you are interested in reading the findings of the research these will be available on the Respect website <http://www.respect.uk.net>. You will not be named anywhere in any report.

What are the possible problems or risks of taking part?

Whatever you say in this interview is confidential unless you tell the researcher that you or someone else is in immediate danger of serious harm, or the researcher sees or is told about something that is likely to cause serious harm. If that happens, the researcher will raise this with you during the interview and tell you about what could happen if you continue to talk about it and explore how you would prefer to deal with the situation. The researcher will encourage you to seek support from your programme or other local services to help you to make the situation safer. If the researcher feels unsure that you will go and get support, they will talk to you about what they will need to do and what might happen next. In an extreme case where a child is at serious risk, and you choose not to seek help/advice the researcher has a duty to disclose this to the relevant agencies.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this research?

Domestic violence support services – including men’s programmes – are experiencing a difficult economic climate and there is a need for more evidence about what works. By taking part in this interview you will help services improve and help other men who have or will experience what you have been through.

Who has reviewed this study?

All research is looked at by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee at London Metropolitan University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a problem to do with this research, you can either speak to one of the researchers, who will do their best to help. Alternatively you can get in touch with one of the people responsible for the research, by contacting Liz Kelly l.kelly@londonmet.ac.uk and on 020 7133 5014 or Nicole Westmarland at nicole.westmarland@durham.ac.uk and on 07786 173809.

If I want to take part what should I do next?

If you are interested in taking part in the in-depth interviews you can either:

1. Give permission to your programme worker to give us your phone number and we will call you to arrange an interview, or
2. Phone the researchers directly on the numbers below to arrange an interview.

If you have any questions about the research or require further information about the research project please contact the researchers. The phone numbers for the Durham University research team are:

Richard – 07527 605616

Julia – 07530 575539