

What are the personal support and wellbeing needs of people who provide informal support to individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours and how can these be met? An iterative Participatory Focus Group methodology.

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your friends and relatives if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

'Suicidal behaviours' refers to people causing themselves actual bodily harm or overthinking about causing themselves bodily harm.

People with lived experience of suicidal behaviours say that they would like help and support from friends and/or family members but stigma about suicide often stops them from asking for help. Although such support is recommended within national suicide prevention guidance, it fails to identify the needs of friends and/or family members when undertaking this role or provide tangible support for them.

This study seeks the views of individuals who self-identify as family, friends or carers (i.e. 'significant others') who provide direct support to individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours, about what their specific needs are when providing this support and what is needed to maintain their own wellbeing.

1. Why have I been chosen to take part?

Within this study we refer to anyone who provides a supportive role to individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours as 'significant others'. We are inviting anyone who self-identifies as a 'significant other' to take part in this study.

2. Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a Consent Form to take part in a single focus group session, with others who also self-identify as a 'significant other', to discuss the needs of this role and what is required to support the wellbeing of 'significant others' when undertaking this role.

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3. What will happen if I take part?

If you would like to take part in this study please contact the Researcher, via the contact details provided in section 12 below. The Researcher will be able to answer any questions you may have about the study and provide any additional information you need to help you decide whether or not you wish to formally agree to take part in this study.

If you do decide to take part, the researcher will seek your informal (either via email or verbally) consent and discuss your availability to attend a focus group session. A subsequent confirmation email will confirm the date/time and location of your focus group session. You can choose the location of your focus group session between: the University of Liverpool, the Lived Experience Network Office from which you were recruited, or virtually via MS Teams / Zoom. The focus group will normally last about one hour and no more than two hours and, where possible, will be held between one- and three months following the date of you consent to taking part in this study and no longer than six months from this date.

The Researcher will have the ability to remind you about this study via email or telephone contact on three more occasions across a six-week timeframe from the date your Participant Information Sheet was sent to you. If you choose not to make contact within this timeframe, or you decline the invitation to take part in this study, no further contact about this study will be made by the Researcher.

Prior to the start of each focus group session, the Researcher will review of the information detailed in this Participant Information Sheet with you and provide a further opportunity for you to ask any questions and/or seek further explanation about the study, before confirming your participation; and inviting you to complete a Consent Form. By signing the Consent Form you will formalise your agreement to taking part in the study, and to complying with the focus-group safety monitoring procedures and for the session to be audio-recorded.

If the focus group session is face-to-face, you will be asked to complete two paper-based versions of the Consent Form, so that both you and the Researcher can have a copy of the signed Consent Form, prior to the start of your focus group session. If your focus group session is on-line, the Researcher will email the Consent Form to you ahead of the session and invite you to complete and sign the Consent Form and then email a copy of this signed consent form back to the Researcher ahead of the session. You will then also have a copy for yourself. The researcher will then ask you and other focus group members to verbally restate your consent to taking part, prior to the start of your focus group session.

Once you and the other focus group members have confirmed your consent, the Researcher will then invite to you provide verbal agreement to the focus group session Group Rules, which are:

- o Maintain the confidentiality of the focus group discussions.
- o Speak as openly as you feel comfortable.
- o There are no right or wrong answers - All responses are valid.
- o Respect the opinions of others regardless of your personal views and opinions.
- o Stay on topic.
- o Avoid revealing information that could identify individuals.

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The Researcher will then introduce a series of questions that seek your response and group discussion and debate about: the personal attributes, skills and knowledge needed to undertake this significant other role; the benefits and barriers to performing this role; the impact that this role has upon individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours; the impact this role has upon the clinical care provided to individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours; the impact that this role has upon the significant other; and their personal wellbeing needs and how these can be met.

Throughout the focus group discussion, you will not have to answer any questions you do not want to. You will also be allowed to take breaks during the focus group if needed.

If you raise a concern which needs to be explored and managed outside the focus group the Researcher will discuss this with you in a subsequent in-person or on-line discussion to see whether further action by the Research Team needs to be taken.

Following your participation in your focus group session, you will be reminded of your invitation to record a short (no more than 3 minute) video to share your evaluation of the project and your involvement in it, including your: expectations, aspirations and experiences of being involved in the focus group session and regarding the project more broadly, in terms of its aims, its intended outputs and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the projects' management and governance processes and practices. This video can be emailed to the researcher at your earliest convenience.

You will also have the opportunity to review and comment upon the Project Summary Report ahead of its publication. This report will be widely publicised and shared across and by the collaborating organisations and participating Lived Experience Networks raise awareness of significant other's personal support and wellbeing needs to public health decision makers, commissioners, clinicians, 3rd sector service providers, and the general public.

4. How will my data be used?

The University processes personal data as part of its research and teaching activities in accordance with the lawful basis of 'public task', and in accordance with the University's purpose of "advancing education, learning and research for the public benefit".

Under UK data protection legislation, the University acts as the Data Controller for personal data collected as part of the University's research. The Principal Investigator acts as the Data Processor for this study, and any queries relating to the handling of your personal data can be sent to Professor Elizabeth Perkins (Email: e.perkins@liv.ac.uk) who is the Principle Investigator for this project.

Further information on how your data will be used can be found in the table below.

How will my data be collected?	Your data will be the information you provide within the Consent Form, your responses to questions and discussions/debate during the focus group session captured via an initial audio-recording and subsequent transcript and your project evaluation video.
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	With your permission the focus group session will be audio-recorded using a mobile digital audio recorder. However, if one or more participants in each session do not give consent for the focus group to be recorded detailed notes of the focus group discussions will be taken and written up and included within the data analysis alongside the audio-recording transcripts.
How will my data be stored?	Paper-based Consent Forms, audio-recordings and verbatim transcripts will be transferred and stored on a University of Liverpool Managed Windows System Computer - saved under a secure drive - at the earliest opportunity.
How long will my data be stored for?	Your personal data will be stored separately and confidentially as electronic files within the University of Liverpool computer system, for not more than 10 years after the date of publication of this study and its findings. This time period is necessary to be able to verify and defend, when required, the study process and outcomes.
What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of my data?	Personal data collected from you will be logged using a unique study reference number. This study reference number will provide a link to your identity and will be stored securely and separately from any other study data and documents.
Limits to confidentiality	The information you share with us will be kept confidential and not shared with others. There are no limits to this confidentiality.
Will my data be anonymised?	Yes. All information will be anonymised to make sure that you cannot be identified. Anonymised quotes from focus group sessions may be included in study reports, publications and/or presentations.
How will my data be used?	The results of the study will be made available in a PhD Thesis; academic journals, conference presentations, and talks; University of Liverpool & Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust communications; public engagement forums; multi-media channels; policy impact summaries. You will also have the choice of having a summary of the findings sent to you. If you request this within your signed Consent Form, we will store a copy of your contact details up till the end of the study. We will destroy this information once the summary had been sent to you
Who will have access to my data?	Only members of the research team will have access to your signed consent form and be able to listen to the audio recordings. This study is being supported by a small group (no more than six people) from the Cheshire & Merseyside Lived Experience Network who self-identify as 'significant others'. This group will act as a Public Advisory Group for this study and comment upon anonymised transcripts and analyses.

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Will my data be archived for use in other research projects in the future?	The audio and visual recordings and written text will not be used for any other purposes without your written permission.
How will my data be destroyed?	Once the paper-based Consent Forms, audio/video recordings and written session notes have been scanned and saved as electronic files, they will be confidentially destroyed or deleted from the recording device and/or email, as appropriate At the end of this study, your personal data, stored separately and confidentially as electronic files within the University of Liverpool computer system, will be archived within the University of Liverpool's Active Data Store (ADS). Data will be confidentially destroyed 10 years after the date of publication of this study and its findings.

5. Expenses and / or payments

If you decide to take part in this study we will reimburse you with high street vouchers of your choice worth £25 per hour for: 1) attending a single focus group session (as timed by the Researcher); 2) ½ an hour to create and provide a short (no more than 3 minutes) project evaluation video; and 3) 1 hour to comment upon the penultimate Project Summary Report.

6. Are there any risks in taking part?

During the focus group session, you may find some questions upsetting or uncomfortable to answer or they may invoke a level of distress for you. You do not have to answer anything you do not wish to. In addition, you can take a break or pause the session at any time if you need to, by letting the Researcher know. If you are finding the session difficult, the Researcher will be able to offer support and will check with you if you would like to continue with the focus group session or not. If you choose to continue the Researcher will offer you a follow-up conversation to provide informal support and, if needed, offer help to access either informal or formal support. Should you feel upset or distressed subsequent to taking part in the focus group session details of 24-hour helpline support is noted at the end of this Participant Information Sheet and within the Consent Form.

It is also possible that you may become distressed when creating your evaluation video. The Researcher will use the contact details provided within your Participant Consent Form to provide a telephone/email follow-up to individuals who are visibly distressed, to see whether they need help to access either informal or formal support.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

In addition to the monetary reimbursement for taking part in this study, you may gain satisfaction from participating in research and supporting the generation of new knowledge which will be important to people like yourself who provide informal support to individuals who engage in suicidal behaviours.

8. What will happen to the results of the study?

This report will be widely publicised and shared across and by the collaborating organisations and participating Lived Experience Networks. This summary report will be used to raise awareness of

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significant other's personal support and wellbeing needs to public health decision makers, commissioners, clinicians, 3rd sector service providers, and the general public.

These findings will also be reported in an academic publication and will be included in the final chapter of the Lead Applicants PhD thesis. The information shared would not allow anyone who takes part in the study to be identified.

9. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time, without giving a reason, up until completion of the data analyses phase of this study, by informing the investigators using the contact details at the end of this Participant Information Sheet. If you would also prefer for any information collected about you to be destroyed, please let the investigators know when you withdraw. After this point your data will not be able to be extracted from the data analyses but will be anonymised to maintain your confidentiality.

10. What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting the study's Principle Investigator: Professor Elizabeth Perkins, (Email: e.perkins@liv.ac.uk) and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Ethics and Integrity Office at ethics@liv.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics and Integrity Office, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office by calling 0303 123 1113.

11. Who can I contact if I have further questions?

Principal Investigator

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If you are feeling distressed and need support, please contact any of the following services:

- Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans, or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours
- Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line, or text "YM" if you're under 19.
- Call 0800 068 4141 to talk to Papyrus, or text: 07860 039967 or email: pat@papyrus-uk.org