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**Participant Information sheet (Reference: 13/01/22)**

**The impacts of COVID-19 on different population groups across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly**

What is the study about?

We invite you to participate in a research project examining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people living across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The study is particularly interested in discovering the impacts of the pandemic on mental health and wellbeing, which includes the health issues experienced as a result of long-COVID. The study is part of our response and recovery to the impacts of the pandemic and will be used to inform local measures to help improve the health of the local population.

Why have I been invited to take part?

We are inviting people from across Cornwall to share their experiences of the pandemic and the impact that it has had on their lives.

Do I have to take part?

This information sheet has been written to help you decide if you would like to take part. It is up to you and you alone to decide whether you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be free to withdraw at any time without providing a reason, and with no negative consequences. You can do this by contacting the team on the below contact details.

What would I be required to do?

Once you have read and understood this participant information sheet, please complete the content form. You will then be asked to take part in the research. All the questions are optional. If there are any you would prefer not to answer, please ask to move on to the next question or skip the question if completing via survey. Once you have completed the focus group, interview or survey your involvement in the study is complete, thank you.

Are there any risks associated with Taking part?

We do not believe there are any risks associated with participating in the study. Your answers will be anonymised before they are provided to the researcher, and therefore cannot be attributed to

you. The survey includes questions about you, where you live, your health, whether you have contracted COVID-19 and whether you are suffering from any long-term effects. If you are not comfortable completing any of these questions, please ask to move onto the next question select or proceed to the next question if completing by survey. For those households who request hard copies of the question, we will ensure these are sent out via post.

If you have contracted COVID-19 and are suffering from any long-term physical and/or mental health effects (i.e., long-COVID) and are not receiving any treatment then you can refer into the Long-COVID service (via your GP who will check your eligibility) and/or visit our mental health webpages where you can find out about how to get help – please visit [www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth). Alternatively, you could call local NHS helpline for free on **0800 038 5300**, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else’s mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone response line will listen to you and determine how best to help.

Informed consent

By completing this survey, you are granting your consent to participate in the survey. Please contact Healthwatch Cornwall or Chaos with any questions. They will either answer these directly or pass them on anonymously to the public health team to enable you to make an informed decision as to whether you wish to proceed.

Who is funding the research?

This research is being funded and conducted by the Public Health team on behalf of the Health and Care Partnership.

What information about me (‘my data’) will you be collecting?

Your gender and age will be collected. The survey also includes information about your life, health and wellbeing in general and specifically in relation to COVID-19, long-COVID and food poverty. There are no right or wrong answers to this group of questions, we are interested in your opinions and experiences.

Any published documentation of the research will only provide anonymised and aggregated data i.e., there will be no way of identifying any individual.

How will my data be securely stored, who will have access to it?

Your data will be stored in a **pseudonymised** form, which means that parts of your data will be edited or deleted such that no-one, including the researchers, could use any reasonably available means to identify you from the data. Your un-anonymised data will only be stored by Healthwatch Cornwall and Chaos.

Your anonymised data will be stored on a secure network, and only Healthwatch Cornwall and Chaos will be able to access it.

How will my data be used, and in what form will it be shared further?

The impact of the pandemic on health has both a short and long-term impact that many people will be affected by. For this reason, your research data will be analysed as part of the research study and the findings shared locally, nationally and internally to help inform health and care responses. It will then be published in research reports/publications and a summary of the findings will be produced and made available from the researcher. The findings will also be written up for policymakers to help ensure that everyone’s physical and mental health and wellbeing are protected during the current and any future pandemics.

The findings from the survey will help inform the development of future long-COVID services, as well as medical and mental health services. Only summarised unidentifiable data will be shared with health colleagues to help meet the health needs of residents across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It will also help inform the wider planning and response across health and social care.

The project to which this research relates will be finalised by the end of March 2022.

When will my data be destroyed?

In line with NHS recommendations, we will store your original survey responses for a period of 8 years, which will enable us to compare changes in health status in the future, particularly with respect to the impacts of long-COVID. However, the pseudonymised data will be destroyed once the project has been completed. We may also wish to carry out follow up survey should you consent to this.

Will my participation be confidential?

Yes, your participation will only be known to Healthwatch Cornwall and Chaos.

Use of your personal data and data protection rights

Healthwatch Cornwall and Chaos (the ‘Data Controller’) is bound by the UK 2018 Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which require a lawful basis for all processing of personal data (in this case it is the ‘performance of a task carried out in the public interest’ – namely, for research purposes) and an additional lawful basis for processing personal data containing special characteristics (in this case it is ‘public interest research’).

The processing of this data also falls under the Coronavirus (COVID-19): notice under regulation 3(4) of the Health Service (Control of Patient Information) Regulations 2002. Where information to be processed is required for a COVID-19 purpose in this instance, understanding COVID-19 and risks to public health, trends in COVID-19 and research and planning in relation to COVID-19.

You have a range of rights under data protection legislation. For more information on data protection legislation and your rights then please contact the data protection and information governance team (below).

Ethical Approvals

This research proposal has been scrutinised and subsequently granted ethical approval by the Research Governance Framework committee at Cornwall Council.

What should I do if I have concerns about this study?

In the first instance, you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the Healthwatch Cornwall and Chaos team detailed below. However, if you do not feel comfortable doing so, then you should contact the data protection and information governance team (detailed above).

For any general enquiries about the project, then please contact:

Contact details:

To contact Healthwatch Cornwall, please call [01872 273501](https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=healthwatch+cornwall&ei=PZTgYdqFNdObgQbD3Y1g&ved=0ahUKEwiamPTv0K_1AhXTTcAKHcNuAwwQ4dUDCA4&uact=5&oq=healthwatch+cornwall&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCwguEIAEEMcBEK8BMgUIABCABDIFCAAQgAQyBAgAEB4yBAgAEB4yBggAEAUQHjIGCAAQCBAeOgYIABAHEB46CAgAEAgQBxAeOgoILhDHARCvARANSgQIQRgASgQIRhgAUABY5gtgow1oAHACeAGAAc4BiAHbCpIBBTUuNi4xmAEAoAEBwAEB&sclient=gws-wiz%23) or email enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk

To contact Chaos Group Cornwall, please contact [01872 277600](https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=chaos+group+cornwall&ei=lpngYZ6GHojLgAb_lJ7oCA&ved=0ahUKEwieqcL81a_1AhWIJcAKHX-KB40Q4dUDCA4&uact=5&oq=chaos+group+cornwall&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCwguEIAEEMcBEK8BMgUIABCABDoFCAAQkQI6BAgAEEM6DgguEIAEELEDEMcBEKMCOggIABCABBCxAzoLCC4QgAQQsQMQgwE6CAguELEDEIMBOgUILhCABDoICAAQsQMQkQI6CggAELEDEMkDEEM6BQgAEJIDOggILhCABBCxAzoHCC4QsQMQQzoHCAAQsQMQQzoOCC4QgAQQsQMQxwEQrwE6CAgAELEDEIMBOggIABCABBDJA0oECEEYAEoECEYYAFAAWO4aYJQcaABwAngCgAHeAogBrRWSAQgxMC42LjEuM5gBAKABAcABAQ&sclient=gws-wiz%23) or email hello@chaosgroupcornwall.co.uk