

Learning from you about how to help and protect people who may rely on others for support with benefit applications  
About the study and your rights

## **Who are we?**

We are user researchers working in the Social Security Directorate.

## **What is this study for?**

The Scottish Government is starting new benefits that replace old ones from the DWP. These will include benefits for people who have a disability or need support to pay for things like funerals, heating during the winter or a newborn.

They are also looking at how best to support and/or protect clients where they may have one or more people who they rely on for support when applying for these benefits.

Our study will help ensure we don't create unnecessary stress or gaps in support for clients with our approach. Likewise we want to ensure clients and their information are protected.

## **What will happen?**

We want to send you a short survey to complete about your experiences in needing support with your benefit applications.

At the end you have the option to volunteer for additional research by giving your email address. This is completely optional and it's ok not to do so. We understand that you may prefer to remain anonymous.

Once we have your responses, we may wish to ask you if you'd be willing to take part in a further exercise to look at and react to some materials and so we can understand your needs better.

If this happens we'll give you options on how you can tell us more:

- We can book in a chat by telephone at a time that suits you.
- We can send you one or two questions by email and you can reply to us in writing
- We can create an online chat where you can send us messages

We'll let you know beforehand what we'd like to show you and ask you about, and of course you can decline if you don't wish to tell us anything more.

We will keep copies of any written responses and will take notes if we speak to you by phone so that we can remember what you told us.

### **What information about me will you keep from this research?**

We will also ask for your email address on our survey in case you are willing to take part in further research, but you can leave this blank if you wish to remain anonymous.

If we speak to you further or exchange emails, we will type up notes from what you tell us and then delete any emails you have sent us. When we make notes, we will not use your name.

We will type up our notes and keep them in a private folder on our computer. We will keep anything else we know about you in a private folder. This folder can only be opened by the research team.

### **What are my rights?**

It is up to you if you want to take part.

- You can stop at any time. This means you can choose not to respond at all or you can decide mid-way that you don't wish to continue.
- You do not have to give a reason for not continuing.
- You can take a break at any time.
- You can ask questions at any time.
- We keep what you tell us private.
- You can ask to see any information about you that we have kept.
- You can ask us to update or delete what we know about you.
- Sometimes we cannot do this. For instance when we have already published a report about the study. However, no one will be able to work out who you are from the report.)

## **Who will see what I tell you**

We will share what you tell us with other people working on the third party representation project so they can improve the process for supporting clients who have friends, carers, charities or others who help them in applying for benefits.

When we do this we may use your exact words so that people can know about what is important to you.

When we do this we keep your name private. We will not share your exact words if it is easy to work out who you are from what you have said.

We may share research within Social Security if it can help with another part of the service.

We may tell the public about the important parts of our research in reports we make once the research is done.

If we think that you are in danger, or might hurt yourself or someone else, we have a duty to tell people that can help. This would be someone from another organisation.

## **How long do you keep what I tell you?**

We keep what you tell us for up to two years. After two years we delete what you have told us.

## **Why can you use or share what I have told you?**

The lawful basis we use to use and share what you have told us is Public Task (6(1) (e)) from the General Data Protection Regulation. Please ask if you have any questions about how this works.

## **What can I do if I am worried about what you are doing with what I have told you?**

If you are worried about this there is someone you can get in touch with. This person checks that we keep what people tell us private. To talk to this person, you can e-mail: [DataProtectionOfficer@gov.scot](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@gov.scot).

If you are still worried, there is another person you can talk to. This person works at the Information Commissioners Office.

To talk to this person, you can e-mail: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk).

If you want us to delete or update what you have told us you can e-mail us at [socialsecurity.researchoperations@gov.scot](mailto:socialsecurity.researchoperations@gov.scot).

### **What can I do if I have concerns about how I was treated during the research?**

If you are worried about this you can contact the Office of the Chief Designer. They are in charge of how user research is done. The talk to them, you can e-mail [design@gov.scot](mailto:design@gov.scot).

### **What happens next?**

Please feel free to ask if you have any questions.

If you are happy to take part in this research, we have a permission form for you to sign.

**THANK YOU!**