

Participant Information Sheet: taking part in an interview

In brief

Some work by Mind suggests that people with mental health problems are more likely to be victims of crime and may also face problems in reporting crime and accessing justice.

We want to find out more about how people with mental health problems have been helped after a crime or whether they have experienced problems. We will use this information so we can suggest how to improve the support for people with mental health problems.

Victim Support and Mind, working with some London Universities, are asking people with mental health problems who have been victims of crime to tell a researcher about their experiences in deciding to report the crime or not and what happened after that.

We would like to talk to you if:

- You have been a victim of crime in the last 3 years
- You have a mental health problem
- You are aged over 18 years
- You are living in London

If you take part in an interview we will give you £20 for your time. We will also pay for the cost of your travel to and from the interview.

We will arrange interviews for a time that suits you. They will take place at a local Mind or Victim Support Office.

To find out more about this project please turn to the next page in this document.

If you would like to speak to someone you can call Sian Greenhead on **020 7268 0222**, or, you email her at sian.greenhead@victimsupport.org.uk

Participant Information Sheet: in detail

Why is this research being carried out?

Victim Support and Mind are finding out about the experiences of people with mental health problems who have been victims of crime.

We are interested in understanding the decisions they make, actions they take and the help and support they get. We also want to learn about peoples' experiences with the justice system and of reporting crime. If they didn't report the crime, we want to look at why, and what else they did, if anything.

We are carrying out this work because earlier research by Mind suggests that people with mental health problems are more likely to be victims of crime and also face real difficulties in reporting crime and accessing justice.

By talking to people directly about their experiences, we hope to understand this situation better and look at how things can be improved. We will use our findings to inform government, voluntary and community agencies and policy makers, about how they can improve their services for victims of crime who have mental health problems.

Who is carrying out this research?

This research is being carried out by Victim Support (the national victims' charity), Mind (the mental health charity), Kings College London (the Institute of Psychiatry) and St George's University of London & Kingston University. It is funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

What does taking part involve?

If you want to take part you should email or call Sian Greenhead using the contact details on the first and last pages of this document. Sian will discuss the project with you in more detail and if you decide that you want to take part then she will arrange a time with you to carry out the interview.

The interviews will be at local Victim Support or Mind offices at a time and date that suits you. If you do not wish to travel, or if you have any special needs, we can discuss this and make other arrangements. You may want someone to come with you (e.g. a friend, family member, support worker). This is fine, just let us know.

The interview will be held in a private space and will last approximately **one hour**. You can take a break or stop the interview at any time.

What will I be asked about in the interview?

We will ask you about your experiences with the justice system in reporting the crime, what problems you may have faced, what and who helped you, and any views you have on how things can be improved.

If you did not report the crime, we will ask why you decided not to, what you did instead and how you think things could be improved for people who have similar experiences. We will ask you briefly about the type of mental health problem you experience and the nature of the crime you were a victim of however you do not have to go into detail about this.

What happens to the information I share?

We would like to record the interview and type it up. We will not use any personal information like your name or where you live, so no one reading the report will be able to know it was you talking. We will delete the tape as soon as it is typed up. If you don't want to be taped, that is fine, just tell us and we will just take notes.

We will go through the information from the interview very carefully and look at similarities and differences between your interview and other interviews. We will write a report. We may use the exact words you said or part of what happened to you. If we do this we will make sure no one can tell it was you.

The information you share will remain confidential but may be looked at by other people from the research team. If any of the information you share with us makes us think that you or another person or child is suffering neglect or abuse, or is at risk, then we have to share this with an appropriate professional. If we think that we have to do this, we will normally discuss this with you first.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part or not. If you decide to take part we will ask you to sign a consent form and give you a copy of this.

You can decide not to take part in this research any point during the interview without giving a reason. If you decide not to take part at any point this will not affect any support you receive from Victim Support or Mind, now or in the future.

Are there any risks involved in taking part?

There are no obvious risks in taking part. However, sometimes people can feel upset when they remember or talk about bad events they have had in the past, such as experiencing crime against them. If you become upset then we will give you some time and check if you wish to stop or continue the interview. Staff from Victim Support and Mind will be available to give you support if you need it. We will also have information about other services that might be able to help you.

Will I get paid for taking part?

We will give you £20 for taking part in the interview and pay for your travel to and from the interview. You will need to check whether this money will affect any benefits you may be receiving.

Who do I contact for further information?

You can call or email Sian Greenhead at Victim Support.

Tel: 0207 268 0222

Email: sian.greenhead@victimsupport.org.uk

Thank you for reading this information.

