

**Exploring the future of remote care for adults with hearing aids within the UK**

**Participant Information Sheet**

**Invitation**

I would like to invite you to take part in a study forming part of an MSc dissertation project.

Before you decide if you would like to participate, take time to read the following information carefully and, if you wish, discuss it with others such as your family, friends or colleagues.

Please ask the study team, whose contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet, if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information before you make your decision.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

The aim of my project is to better understand the use of remote fine tuning of hearing aids in adult NHS hearing services in a Post-lockdown world. By obtaining the current views and experiences of audiologist regarding remote fine tuning, the aim is to use this to build knowledge of the current landscape and inform future use of remote fine tuning. We hope this study can enable remote fine tuning to be used more successfully, allowing patients to receive greater access to care.

**Why have I been invited?**

**You are being invited to take part in this study because you are a member of an Audiology professional body or society.**

**To take part in this study you should:**

* Be a qualified audiologist
* Have experience in fitting hearing aids in adult audiology
* Work or have worked for the NHS
* Experience of remote fine tuning is not required

After consenting to participate, we will ask you to complete a screening questionnaire to further determine your eligibility prior to the study commencing. This will be to collect the following data:

* ~~Sex~~
* Region of UK
* Number of years experience in Audiology
* City/Community based hospital
* Experience of remote fine tuning **(Yes/No)**

We are looking for participants who vary in experience with remote fine tuning whether that be no experience or a vast amount so this information will be required before the final participants are chosen in order to make sure we have a balanced mixture of perspectives. This means there is a chance you may not be asked for interview.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**  
If you decide to participate, you will be invited to take part in an online interview that will focus on how hearing aids are fine tuned in your department, your views on fine tuning and what you see are the advantages and drawbacks. The interview is designed to gather an idea of how remote fine tuning is or can be used in a post-covid world and how this information can be used to inform future use. The interview should take approximately **45** minutes of your time.

**Do I have to take part?  
  
No.** It is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part  
If you do decide to participate, you will be asked to sign and date a consent form. You can halt your participation at any time during the interview just by letting the researcher know and any data collected up to that point will not be used. You would still be free to withdraw from the study at any time up to 2 weeks from the date of your interview without giving a reason by emailing the researcher.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?  
  
Yes.** A code will be attached to all the data you provide to maintain anonymity. Analysis of your data will be undertaken using coded data.

If we need to collect personal data (such as a name and contact details) we will only use this for the purposes outlined in this participant information sheet – e.g., to contact you to arrange the interview.The data we collect will be stored electronically on a secure cloud storage device at Aston University.  
  
To ensure the quality of the research, Aston University may need to access your data to check that the data has been recorded accurately, e.g., for the purposes of audit. If this is required, your personal data will be treated as confidential by the individuals accessing your data.

**How will the conversation during the interview be recorded and the information I provide managed?**

With your permission we will record the interview and take notes. **You can choose whether you would like the camera to be switched on or not at the start of the interview or you can contact me beforehand on** [**210271878@aston.ac.uk**](mailto:210271878@aston.ac.uk)**.**

The recording will be automatically transcribed by the software. This process will involve removing any information which could be used to identify you or other individuals e.g. names, locations etc.

Recordings will be destroyed as soon as the transcripts have been checked for accuracy.

We will ensure that anything you have told us that is included in the reporting of the study will be anonymous.

You of course are free not to answer any questions that are asked without giving a reason.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**While there are no direct benefits to you of taking part in this study, the data gained will help in the future to enable more successful remote fine tuning and allow it to be implemented more efficiently. This will in turn mean patients are receiving a better service and greater access to care.

**What are the possible risks and burdens of taking part?**

The study does not involve patients or any practical elements so there are very limited risks. In terms of information, the interviews will be conducted in a private room so any confidential information will not be overheard.

The following possible risks have been identified:

* Poor **audiological** practice **could be highlighted during the interview which could cause distress or worry**

**To mitigate against this, it will be made clear at the start of the interview that if at any point they do feel distressed they can stop the interview at any time or can be signposted to my supervisor.** **Additionally, an interview guide will help to structure the interview in a way which prevents disclosure of poor practice. If information is disclosed about practice that is a potential harm or unsafe to others, participants will be made aware this will have to be reported to my supervisor**

* Clinic time **might be reduced due to participating in the interview**

**To reduce time away from clinic, the interviews will be conducted electronically and at a time which is suited to the participant so as not to impact their time with patients.**

* Data storage breech

To mitigate against this, encryption and password protection will be used to protect data.

In terms of burden, the interview will require **no more than** **45** minutes of your time.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**The results of this study will be published in the MSc dissertation report of the researcher, wherein your identity will remain confidential.

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals and/or presented at conferences. If the results of the study are published, your identity will remain confidential.

**Expenses and payments**There are no expenses or payments being provided for participation.   
  
**Who is funding the research?**The study is being funded by the Scientist Training Program.  
  
**Who is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study?**Aston University is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study. Research data will be used only for the purposes of the study or related uses identified in this Information Sheet or Appendix A.

**Who has reviewed the study?**This study was given a favorable ethical opinion under delegated authority of the Health and Life Science Research Ethics Committee.

**What if I have a concern about my participation in the study?**If you have any concerns about your participation in this study, please speak to the researcher and they will do their best to answer your questions. Contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet.If the researcher is unable to address your concerns or you wish to make a complaint about how the study is being conducted you should contact the Aston University Research Integrity Office at [research\_governance@aston.ac.uk](mailto:research_governance@aston.ac.uk) or telephone 0121 204 3000.  
  
  
**Research Team Details**

Charlotte White- Student

[210271878@aston.ac.uk](mailto:210271878@aston.ac.uk)

07944127395

Bhavisha Parmar- Supervisor

[b.parmar10@aston.ac.uk](mailto:b.parmar10@aston.ac.uk)

Amanda Hall- Programme lead

[a.hall@aston.ac.uk](mailto:a.hall@aston.ac.uk)

**Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet. If you have any questions regarding the study please don’t hesitate to ask one of the research team.**



**Appendix A: Transparency Statement**

Aston University takes its obligations under data and privacy law seriously and complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 (“DPA”) and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 as retained in UK law by the Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications (Amendments etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (“the UK GDPR”).

Aston University is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study. Aston University will process your personal data in order to register you as a participant and to manage your participation in the study. It will process your personal data on the grounds that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest (GDPR Article 6(1)(e). Aston University may process special categories of data about you which includes details about your health. Aston University will process this data on the grounds that it is necessary for statistical or research purposes (GDPR Article 9(2)(j)). Aston University will keep identifiable information about you for 6 years after the study has finished.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible.

You can find out more about how we use your information at https://www.aston.ac.uk/about/statutes-ordinances-regulations/publication-scheme/policies-regulations/data-protection or by contacting our Data Protection Officer at [dp\_officer@aston.ac.uk](mailto:dp_officer@aston.ac.uk).

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO).