



## Participant Information Sheet for Participants

[FOR USE WITH STANDARD PRIVACY NOTICE FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS]

Name of department: **Department of Psychological Sciences and Health, Strathclyde Counselling & Psychotherapy Research Clinic**

Title of the study: Addressing the research-practice gap in the counselling field: How do counselling practitioners translate research findings into practice?

### Introduction

The Strathclyde Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Clinic ('the research clinic') is part of the Counselling Unit within the Department of Psychological Sciences & Health. The research clinic offers free counselling (provided by students of our [MSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy](#) programme) to members of the local community who agree to take part in our ongoing research study to understand how person-centred therapy (PCT) can help people experiencing a range of difficulties.

Researchers access our archive to answer a broad range of research questions about how clients use PCT to work through their difficulties (see our [publications](#)). However, most practising counsellors do not identify as academics and do not read academic journals, leading to a significant research-practice gap. We would like to address this gap by piloting a series of four workshops around specific themes relating to therapeutic practice and invite a range of clinicians to take part in them. We hope to better understand how practitioners translate what they learn and understand about research findings into their practice.

We have been awarded funding through the University of Strathclyde's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) to deliver this series of workshops and measure the 'real-world' impact they have on practitioners' practice.

### What is the purpose of this investigation?

This investigation aims to find out how counselling practice is impacted by practitioners' awareness of research findings. We will ask you to tell us, through a brief online survey, about the impact of research-based, collaborative workshops on your practice. We are interested in how you make use of the learning you gained from the workshops. We think that it is necessary to ask these questions more than once over a period of time to give time for you to have opportunities in your practice that may be relevant.

### Do you have to take part?

No. The decision on whether you wish to take part in this study is voluntary. You are also entitled to stop participating at any time and can do this without giving a reason. This decision would not affect any other relationship that you have with the research clinic, the Counselling Unit, or the University of Strathclyde. It does also not affect your ability to come to future workshops or events organised by the clinic.

### The place of useful learning

### **Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part as you have attended one or more of the workshops organised by the research clinic. We are interested in how the workshops and our research relate to your practice and how they have impacted (and continue to impact) your client work.

### **What will you do in this project?**

After each workshop, you will be invited via email to complete a short 'impact' questionnaire about your current practice, your experience of the workshop and any key learnings and reflections you are taking with you into your practice. Each survey will take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete. We will then ask you to complete the same survey again after 6 months, 12 months, and annually thereafter up to a period of 5 years if you choose to continue to participate in the study.

Whilst we hope to collect some information about the longer-term impact of the workshops, you do not have to take part indefinitely – it is your choice whether to respond to the feedback questionnaire or not. If you no longer wish to participate in the research, you can simply ignore and delete the emails that contain the follow-up survey links. If you don't want to receive those emails any longer, you can email any member of the research team and ask to be taken off our mailing list.

### **What are the potential risks to you in taking part?**

There are no major risks associated with this research project. However, different aspects of the research may carry some minor risks, as listed below.

- Getting tired or bored of the research: Sometimes, people can get tired of participating in research that continues over a prolonged period of time. For example, you may get bored of filling in the follow-up questionnaires after attending a workshop or multiple workshops. It is important to know that you can stop taking part in the research anytime and without any negative consequences. You can either ignore and delete the invitation to take part in the follow-up survey or ask the researchers to take your name off the list of respondents, so you won't be sent any more links.
- Having realisations about your current or past practice that are challenging or uncomfortable. Continuous professional development (CPD) is meant to challenge developmental edges, and we trust that you have an external supervisor who can support you with anything that may come up for you in this context. You are also welcome to contact the Chief Investigator if you wish to talk through any of the aspects of the workshops/research process.
- Being identified or identifying your clients in the research – we will ask you some information about your therapeutic practice, as well as your learnings from the workshops. In order to ensure anonymity for you, your colleagues, and your clients, we ask that you do not share any personally identifiable information in the survey, especially in the free text boxes. The researchers will also review and redact any survey responses that do include personally identifiable information.

### **What are the potential benefits to you in taking part?**

There may also be some direct and indirect benefits for you or other people if you choose

to take part in this study:

- Completing the follow-up surveys gives you a chance to further reflect on what you have taken away from the workshops. This can help consolidate learning and thoughts and give you an impetus to think about how research may relate to your practice and/or how you may want to integrate aspects of your learning into client work.
- Engaging in the follow-up surveys, as well as the workshops, counts towards the CPD hours required of all accredited practitioners.
- The findings of our study will help other members of the profession understand how practitioners use learning about research findings within their practice.

### **What information is collected in the study?**

We will collect a range of information from you during this project:

- Contact information: When you first sign up for the workshop(s), you will be asked to provide your name and email address through Eventbrite, the platform we use to organise the workshops. Eventbrite is a platform commonly used for event organisation and is governed by GDPR. If you would like to know more about their privacy policy and how your personal data (name and email address) will be processed, please refer to the Eventbrite privacy policy pages which can be found here: [Eventbrite Privacy Policy](#) | [Eventbrite Help Center](#).

The information you provide through Eventbrite (name and email address) will be downloaded into a password-protected spreadsheet for each of the workshops and stored in a secure OneDrive folder only accessible to the research team. This information will be used to contact you for the follow-up surveys after the workshop.

- Basic information about your therapy practice: We will collect some basic information about your therapy practice as part of our post-workshop surveys. As the survey responses are anonymous, we will collect this information every time you fill in a survey. This information will be stored in a secure online platform called Qualtrics until it is downloaded into a secure folder on the University of Strathclyde system. These data will not be associated with your name or email address. As these data are anonymous, you will not be able to withdraw your survey responses once submitted.
- Follow-up questionnaire data: when you complete the follow-up questionnaires, you will be asked to respond to several questions about your experience of the workshops you attended and how they relate to your practice. These data will not be associated with your name or email address. We ask you to avoid sharing any information in the free text fields that may be identifying you or anyone else. If any personally identifying information is shared, we will redact this information to ensure anonymity. You don't have to respond to every question in the survey. If you decide to skip a question, the remaining data will still be recorded. As these data are anonymous, you will not be able to withdraw your survey responses once submitted.

### **Who will have access to the information collected from you?**

Only the research team who are directly involved in the project will have access to your data. We will report back to our funders with a summary of our findings on a yearly basis. As all data will be fully anonymized or pseudonymized at the point of collection, we will never use your real name or details about your practice that could identify who you are.

### **How will the information collected from you be used?**

We will use your name and email address only to send you the link to the follow-up surveys for as long as you are happy for us to do so. We will not use your contact details for any other purpose or share it with any third party.

We will use the anonymous survey data to put together a brief annual report for our funding organisation as part of our commitment to them. We will analyse the data we collect and publish the findings in a research article, as well as an article in *Therapy Today* (the BACP's monthly magazine) about how counsellors translate research into practice. This way, we can reach both academic audiences and other practitioners.

### **Where will the information be stored and how long will it be kept for?**

All personal data (i.e., names and email addresses) will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please read our [Privacy Notice for Research Participants](#) for more information about your rights under the legislation.

We will take several precautions to protect your confidentiality:

- Your contact information will be stored in a password protected spreadsheet in a secure OneDrive folder only accessible to the research team. We will keep your details for up to 6 years (until the completion of the data collection), unless you ask to be removed from the spreadsheet at any time before that. If you wish for your contact details to be removed, you can send an email to any member of the research team.
- Your survey responses will be stored on a secure online platform called Qualtrics. They will periodically be downloaded into a secure OneDrive folder only accessible to the research team. We will keep these data for a period of at least seven years, or as long as they are of scientific value to the research team. Thereafter, the data will be safely deleted by the research team. Please note that, due to the anonymous nature of the data, you cannot ask for survey responses that have been submitted to be deleted before this time.

### **What happens next?**

If you are willing to participate in our research, please go to our website and sign up for any of the workshops you are interested in. If you attend the workshop, we will follow up with you per email after the event by sending you a link to the initial follow-up survey. You will be prompted to consent to be a participant in our research by confirming your consent before starting the survey. If you decide at that point that you do not want to be part of the follow-up research, you will be taken straight to the end of the survey and no data will be collected.

*If, having read this information sheet, you have decided not to participate in our study, we*

*would like to thank you for taking time to find out about what we are doing at the Strathclyde Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Clinic.*

**The research team**

**Chief Investigator details:**

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This research was granted ethical approval by the Department of Psychological Sciences Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the research, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Dr Stephen Butler, Chair of Department of Psychological Sciences and Health Ethics Committee

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## Consent Form for Participants

Name of department: **Strathclyde Counselling & Psychotherapy Research Clinic**

Title of the study: Addressing the research-practice gap in the counselling field: How do counselling practitioners translate research findings into practice?

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and the researchers have answered any queries to my satisfaction.
2. I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice for Participants in Research Projects and understand how my personal information will be used and what will happen to it (i.e. how it will be stored and for how long).
3. I confirm that I am aged 18 or over and that I am aware of what my participation involves, and any potential risks associated with taking part.
4. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, up to the point of completion, without having to give a reason and without any consequences.
5. I understand that I can request the deletion of my contact information at any time by emailing any member of the research team. Doing so will mean that I will no longer be invited to complete any more follow-up surveys.
6. I understand that anonymised data (i.e. data that do not identify me personally) cannot be withdrawn once they have been submitted.
7. I consent to being a participant in the study.