Cognitive interview to assess awareness of consequences of suicide

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

You are being invited to take part in a research study which is being conducted as part of a PhD project and has two aims: to assess people's awareness of potential consequences of suicide that would impact on their life goals during experiences of contemplating and attempting suicide; to identify the types of interview question which would be most beneficial in assessing individuals' awareness of consequences of suicide, for use in a clinical interview which will be developed later in the PhD. The overall aim is to develop a better way of assessing how likely people are to attempt suicide, which may help to prevent suicide in the future.

Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully before deciding whether to take part and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

About the research

- **Who will conduct the research?**

Vanessa Macintyre (PhD Researcher)
Division of Psychology and Mental Health,
School of Health Sciences,
The University of Manchester

Dr Daniel Pratt (primary supervisor)
Division of Psychology and Mental Health,
School of Health Sciences,
The University of Manchester

Dr Sara Tai (co-supervisor)
Division of Psychology and Mental Health,
School of Health Sciences,
The University of Manchester

Dr Warren Mansell (co-supervisor)
Division of Psychology and Mental Health,
School of Health Sciences,
The University of Manchester.

- **What is the purpose of the research?**

The aims of the current study are twofold. Firstly, we aim to use a type of interview known as a cognitive interview to assess people's awareness of the potential consequences of suicide. The

literature on cognitive interviews has shown us that certain types of questions can be used to help an individual develop a stronger awareness and understanding of a specific experience. For example, the interviewer will ask the following questions:

- "When you last thought about attempting suicide, can you describe all of the things that came into your mind?"

- "How do you feel when you are describing these images? Is there anything else you notice?"

By analysing your answers to these types of questions, the research team will be able to identify those experiences (e.g. thoughts, feelings, or mental images) that are most commonly experienced when contemplating suicide and how such experiences may lead an individual to progress to attempting suicide.

The second aim of the current study is to further analyse the data from the cognitive interviews to identify the types of interview question which were most helpful / facilitative in allowing the participant to better develop their awareness of the potential consequences of suicide. The questions revealed in this second analysis will inform the development of a new clinical assessment tool.

We are seeking to assess awareness of potential consequences of suicide in people who have previously contemplated suicide within the past 5 years, and also people who have attempted suicide within the past 5 years.

You have been invited to take part in this study because you have indicated that you have either contemplated or attempted suicide in the past. We intend to recruit a total of 12 participants, consisting of 7 participants who have contemplated suicide alone and 5 individuals who have attempted suicide.

Who can take part?

We are looking to interview individuals who are aged 18 and over, who currently reside in the UK, and are registered with an NHS GP, who have contemplated suicide or attempted suicide within the past 5 years. To be eligible to take part, you must also intend to continue residing in the UK for at least 6 months after the date you consent to take part in the study. However, individuals who are currently considering suicide and/or actively planning suicide are not eligible to take part.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The desired outcomes of this research study are the following: to gain a more in-depth understanding of people's awareness of consequences of suicide which would impact on their life goals during previous experiences of contemplating and/or attempting suicide; and to determine which of the interview questions are most helpful / facilitative at assessing awareness of potential consequences of suicide in people who have contemplated suicide and people who have attempted suicide. We plan to include these interview questions in a new clinical assessment tool that we intend to develop for use in future research studies. Participants will be informed of the findings (if they agree to the researcher retaining their contact details for this purpose) and we will seek to publish the findings in a peer reviewed journal and in a PhD thesis.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check**

Vanessa Macintyre has undergone an Enhanced DBS check for work with potentially vulnerable adults (as determined by the School of Health Sciences and obtained via The University of Manchester).

- **Who has reviewed the research project?**

This project has been reviewed by The University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee 3

- **Who is funding the research project?**

This project is funded by the Medical Research Council Doctoral Training Program (MRC-DTP) under grant number MR/N013751/1.

What would my involvement be?

- **What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

If you agree to take part, you will first be asked to sign a consent form to agree to the conditions of participating in the study. You will then be asked to complete a Demographics Form which asks for the following information: your age, gender, ethnicity, whether you have a diagnosis of a mental health problem, whether one of your family members/relatives/close friends has died by suicide, and whether you have ever attempted suicide. You will also be asked for the following demographic information later on during the interview: how long ago your most recent suicide attempt was (if applicable), and how many times you have attempted suicide (if applicable). Both of these demographic questions are optional to answer – you do not have to answer these questions if you do not feel comfortable doing so. You will be given the opportunity to skip those two questions if you do not wish to answer them.

All demographic information will be stored separately from your consent form and will be kept anonymous. After you have completed the Demographics Form, you will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately up to 1 hour, which will take place on Zoom (access to Zoom is necessary for participation in the study).

You will be asked questions about your thoughts about suicide and what you think about the potential consequences of suicide, which will include talking about experiences of times when you have contemplated or attempted suicide. For example, you would be asked the following question: "When you have felt suicidal, did you think about things/goals that are important in your life? If so, what were these important things/goals?" In addition, certain interview questioning techniques (referred to as cognitive interview techniques) will also be used throughout the interview, which are designed to encourage you to give more in-depth answers to questions and gain more details about your experiences. They will involve asking you to do the following: describe your thoughts and mental images aloud while you answer interview questions about your experiences of suicide; elaborate on certain answers and provide further explanation and/or detail into motives behind contemplating/attempting suicide, and reasons for not making an attempt; describe any difficulties you had in answering certain interview questions.

After the questions, you will be asked to provide feedback on what it was like to be interviewed in this way and then you be guided through a short positive mood induction task. In this task, the researcher will ask you to list characteristics that you like about yourself or feel proud of, and to describe some examples of specific instances when you have displayed these characteristics. If you are unable to think of any characteristics, the researcher will ask you to describe activities or events that you particularly enjoy.

The interview will be conducted privately with one interviewer, and we ask that you sit in a private space where you won't be overheard and interruptions are unlikely to occur. To ensure the privacy of the interview, we would also encourage you to use headphones wherever possible so that the interview questions are not overheard by other people in your home. With your permission, we will audio-record the interview to later be transcribed into text for data analysis purposes only.

You may wish to have a family member or friend present for support immediately before and after the interview, although we do ask that people take part in the interview alone and that your family member or friend waits for you in a different room.

Since you will be asked to talk about your experiences of contemplating or attempting suicide during the interview, it is possible that you may experience distress. If this happens, the researcher would pause the interview and would only continue again if you are happy to continue. If you experience any distress during the study, the researcher will contact you by phone or email within three days after you take part in the study to check whether you have any concerns or questions about your participation in the study. You will also be encouraged to access the available support services listed on the Support Services Contact Information Sheet and at the end of this document, if needed.

If you leave the Zoom call suddenly without explanation, the researcher will contact you immediately to determine if there is a potential cause for concern. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to give consent for this. If this occurs, the researcher will check whether you would like to continue with the interview or whether you would prefer to stop the interview.

We cannot promise any benefits to you from taking part in this study. However, the data you provide may inform future research in the area of suicide prevention. This interview does not involve the provision of any kind of psychological treatment. However, some people might value the opportunity to talk about their experiences of suicide ideation and/or attempts.

Will I be compensated for taking part?

You will be compensated £5 for your time using electronic vouchers or by electronic bank transfer (which would involve filling in a form for this purpose and sending it back to the research team), depending on your preference.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you wish to take part, please contact:

Vanessa Macintyre (PhD Researcher)
Email: vanessa.macintyre@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. If you would like to stop the interview, we ask that you let the researcher know you wish to stop before leaving the Zoom call, so that the researcher can check for any causes for concern. However, it will not be possible to remove your data from the project once your interview transcript has been anonymised as we will not be able to identify your specific data. You should expect your data to have been anonymised within 2 weeks of your taking part in the interview, so please contact the researcher prior to this point if you wish to remove your data. This does not affect your data protection rights. If you decide not to take part you do not need to do anything further.

Audio recordings are essential to your participation in the study. You should be comfortable with the recording process at all times and are free to stop recording at any time if you become uncomfortable with this process.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

- **What information will you collect about me?**

In order to participate in this research project we will need to collect information that could identify you, called "personal identifiable information". Specifically we will need to collect:

- Your full name and signature: these will be retained in a consent form which will be password-protected and kept for 5 years in a secure location on the university server.

- Your email address: this will be stored in a password-protected file in a secure location on the university server. If you indicate on the consent form that you would like to be contacted about the research findings, this will be retained for 5 years. It will be removed if you request to opt out of this. If you do not indicate on the consent form that you would like to be contacted about the findings, your email address will be deleted within one week after the Zoom interview has taken place and any follow-up calls have been completed.

- A contact telephone number for you: this will be stored in a password-protected file in a secure location on the university server, and deleted within one week after the Zoom interview has finished, once any follow-up calls have been completed.

- The address where you will be when you attend the Zoom interview: this will be stored in a password-protected file in a secure location on the university server. It will only be used if emergency services need to be contacted, if the researcher has concerns that you or someone else is unsafe, and will be deleted after the Zoom interview has finished.

- Contact number and address of your GP and/or care team (if applicable): this will be stored in a password-protected file in a secure location on the university server, alongside the consent form. Before the interview is arranged, we will use this information to contact your GP and/or care team to inform them that you are going to take part in the study. We will also use this information to contact your GP and/or care team if we have concerns about your safety or the safety of others at any point during the study (including after the interview has

taken place). We will inform you if we need to do this. These details will be kept for 5 years.

- An audio recording of only your voice: this will be obtained during the interview and stored in a password-protected file in a secure location on the university server. This recording will include your answers to questions on your thoughts and feelings at times you have contemplated/attempted suicide. This will be deleted once your interview has been transcribed.

- The following demographic information: your age, gender, ethnicity, whether you have a diagnosis of a mental health problem, and whether one of your family members/relatives/close friends has died by suicide. This information will be stored anonymously on a secure university server, and will be stored separately from your consent form in order to retain anonymity. This information will be retained for 5 years on the secure university server. It will also be published in an anonymous form in a peer reviewed journal and in a PhD thesis.

Under what legal basis are you collecting this information?

We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with data protection law which protect your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is "a public interest task" and "a process necessary for research purposes".

What are my rights in relation to the information you will collect about me?

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings.

If you would like to know more about your different rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our Privacy Notice for Research.

Will my participation in the study be confidential and my personal identifiable information be protected?

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

- Any personal information in the audio recording (e.g. your name) will be removed when your interview is transcribed into text and it will not be possible to identify you from the data resulting from this or future studies. All information you give will be kept strictly confidential.
- Once transcribed into text, all of the data will be fully anonymised.

Only the study team at The University of Manchester will have access to your personal information, but they will anonymise it as soon as possible. The anonymised data from your interview transcript and your consent form will be retained for 5 years in a secure location on the university server.

The researcher will store your contact details in a database if you indicate on the consent form that you agree to be contacted about the study findings or about future research studies, but this data will be stored securely in a password protected file on the university server for 5 years. The researcher will not contact you on more than two occasions if you do not respond. You will be given the opportunity to opt out of this database with every email sent by the researcher.

Potential disclosures:

- If, during the study (including during the interview and after the interview has taken place), we have concerns about your safety or the safety of others, we will inform your GP/care team, and the emergency services if appropriate. If we need to contact your GP and/or care team or the emergency services, we will inform you of this.
- If, during the Zoom interview, we have concerns about your safety or the safety of others due to information you have disclosed, and the Zoom call ends suddenly without explanation and the researcher is unable to contact you by phone after two attempts, this will be treated as immediate cause for concern. In this scenario, we would need to call the emergency services and contact your GP and/or care team.
- If, during the study, you disclose information about any current or future illegal activities, we have a legal obligation to report this and will therefore need to inform the relevant authorities.

Audio recordings:

- A member of the research team will transcribe the audio recordings verbatim.
- Any personal identifiable information will be removed from the final transcript
- The recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed.

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected for this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

What if I have a complaint?

Contact details for complaints

If you have a complaint that you wish to direct to members of the research team, please contact the project supervisors:

DR DANIEL PRATT (PRIMARY SUPERVISOR)
EMAIL: DANIEL.PRATT@MANCHESTER.AC.UK

TELEPHONE: +44 (0) 161 306 0400

DR SARA TAI (CO-SUPERVISOR)
EMAIL: SARA.TAI@MANCHESTER.AC.UK
TELEPHONE: +44(0)161 2752595

DR WARREN MANSELL (CO-SUPERVISOR)
EMAIL: WARREN.MANSELL@MANCHESTER.AC.UK
TELEPHONE: +44 (0)161 275 8589

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact

The Research Ethics Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 306 8089.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information Tel 0303 123 1113

Contact Details

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the researcher:

VANESSA MACINTYRE (PHD STUDENT)
EMAIL: VANESSA.MACINTYRE@POSTGRAD.MANCHESTER.AC.UK

Support resources

The following support resources can be accessed if you experience any distress as a result of the research:

- Contact your **GP** to arrange an appointment to discuss possible support routes

- If in **crisis** and you feel you may be at immediate risk of attempting suicide
  - 111 (NHS emergency and urgent care services)
    (Contact hours: 24 hours (7 days a week))

- 999 (Emergency services)
  (Contact hours: 24 hours (7 days a week))

- **Helplines and support groups**
  - Samaritans is a national helpline for people experiencing thoughts about suicide (116 123)
    (Contact hours: 24 hours (7 days a week))

  - Shout is a free national confidential texting service for those that need mental health support (Text 'Shout' to 85258)
    (Contact hours: 24 hours (7 days a week))

  - SOS Silence of Suicide is a helpline for people who need emotional support, understanding and compassion (0300 102 0505)
    (Contact hours: 4pm – 12am (7 days a week))

  - Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) is a free and confidential helpline for those who need support (0800 585 858)
    (Contact hours: 5pm-12am (7 days a week))

  - SANEline is a helpline offering specialist emotional support, guidance, and information for those affected by mental health problems (0300 304 7000)
    (Contact hours: 4:30pm – 10:30pm (7 days a week))

  - Mind info line is an information and signposting service for those affected by mental health problems (0300 123 3393)
    (Contact hours: 9am – 6pm (Monday to Friday))

  - If U Care Share is a free national confidential texting service for people experiencing suicidal thoughts (Text 'IUCS' to 85258)
    (Contact hours: 24 hours (7 days a week))