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Childhood Obesity LANDSCAPE Study:
Focus Group Participant Information

You are being invited to take part in an online research study to be carried out by the Obesity Research and Care Group at RCSI, in collaboration with the HSE. Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, you should read the information provided below carefully. Please feel free to ask questions about the study before deciding, by contacting the researcher, Louise Tully (louisetully@rcsi.com) or the principal investigator Dr. Grace O'Malley (graceomalley@rcsi.ie).

You should clearly understand the risks and benefits of taking part in this study so that you can make a decision that is right for you. This process is known as 'Informed Consent'. You do not have to take part in this study, it is voluntary. You can change your mind about taking part in the survey even if you have started it.

Why is this study being done?

Childhood obesity is a challenging public health and health services concern. This study aims to recruit healthcare professionals and managers in Ireland, who provide healthcare for children and adolescents with obesity in their daily practice (either for weight management specifically or not). We plan to invite participants to join an online focus group with 4-6 other healthcare professionals or managers who have similar roles or work in similar settings, to discuss obesity management services for children in Ireland. This will help us to identify current challenges and barriers in relation to providing care for children with obesity and related complications.

Who is organising and funding this study?

This study has been funded by the Health Research Board of Ireland's Applied Partnership Award. It is being undertaken by the Obesity Research and Care Group at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences), led by Dr Grace O'Malley (Principal Investigator) in collaboration with the HSE Health and Wellbeing Division.

Why am I being asked to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are a healthcare professional who works with children and adolescents, so your insight will help us to answer our research questions.

How will the study be carried out?

The study will consist of an online focus group with other healthcare practitioners who work in a similar setting to you. That is, a video conference call where a researcher will ask you to share aspects of your current role in caring for children who may have a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of obesity and issues relating to that. Discussion points may include whether you have the training and resources you need to carry out the aspects of weight management for children within your remit (e.g. assessment, measurements, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, onward referral), or what other barriers exist to providing care. We will also carry out a prioritisation exercise during this session, using an interactive online platform to share and collate ideas.

We will record the session for the purpose of transcribing (writing up, word for word, the discussions by participants), in order to analyse the responses.

What will happen to me if I agree to take part?

You will be invited to join a video call with other participants who have agreed to take part in your focus group. The participants will be asked questions relating to caring for children with obesity and their perceived barriers and challenges to this. Ideas and considerations for how services could be improved will also be discussed. During this online session, you will also be asked to take part in an exercise to help identify priority action areas for improving care for children with obesity. You will be asked to think of ideas and write them down, relating to the above specified topics. We will then discuss ideas and come up with key ideas for the whole group, and then you will be asked to privately rate the top 5 ideas in order of importance. The entire session will take 60-90 minutes in total. If you agree to take part, you will be invited to sign a digital consent form for the session to be video recorded and for your data to be processed, one week before the session.

What are the benefits?

By taking part in this study you will provide invaluable insight into current services, practices and areas for improvement within healthcare for children and adolescents in Ireland. This will inform our research, but there will be no direct benefit to you for participating.

What are the risks?

There are no perceived risks to participating in this study, however it will require contributing your valuable time. It may be burdensome to think about suggestions for improvement of services and identifying challenges within the healthcare system.

Is the study confidential?

The information provided during the focus group discussions will be analysed and used to inform research reports and articles. The video and audio recording of the focus group discussion will only be viewed by members of the research team and possibly approved transcribers (an RCSI-approved, paid, external service responsible for writing up the discussion of the focus group for analysis), and will be deleted permanently once they have been transcribed. Your personal data will not be made available in relation to this study and the discussion transcripts will not be identifiable. Only the study team will have access to your personal details, and these will be deleted after the study.

However, it is important to let you know that the researchers have mandatory obligations in the event that a participant (healthcare professional or manager) reports concerns about the safety of a child in their care. If a child welfare concern is identified by a participant but he/she has not followed Children First protocol in order to make a mandated report, the researcher will remind the participants of their mandatory reporting obligations in line with the Children First Act 2015. If such concerns arise, detailed information would be gathered about the concerns in question and discussed fully with the principal investigator. If it is agreed that there is a perceived risk to children or patients, this will be reported by the principal investigator in her role as a Mandated Person in line with Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015.

Data protection

1. We will be processing your personal data (name and contact information) only for the purpose of inviting and providing information to you about the focus group arrangements. After the study is complete, your personal details will be deleted. Your job title and clinical role will be recorded for use in providing context to your points of discussion in the focus groups. Any answers you provide in the focus group will be stored for analysis. Any indirectly identifiable information from the focus group transcripts will be de-identified.

2. We will use your data for health research purposes in line with Article 6(j) of the General Data Protection Regulations.

3. Members of the research team only will have access to your personal data. Members of the research team and the transcription service only will see/hear the video/audio recording of the focus group. Your input to the focus group discussion however, once de-identified (i.e. any discussion that could reveal your identity removed), may be published in part for the purpose of providing our research findings.

4. We will store your personal data (name and contact information) until the study is completed, and then it will be deleted.

5. We will take every security measure available to use to protect and encrypt files containing your data. If there were to be a breach of data within the data controller's systems, it is possible that your contact details (if you provided them) may be seen by people outside of the research team. Your focus group responses, including the video recordings, could also be compromised in such circumstances.

6. You have the right to withdraw consent to processing of your data at any time before it is anonymised, by contacting a member of the study team.

7. You have a right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Commissioner should you have any concerns regarding the use of your data.

8. You have a right to request access to your data and obtain a copy of it during this research until it has been anonymised.

9. You have a right to let us know if you object to any aspects of our plans for processing your data, and add restrictions to our use of your data.

10. You have a right to have any inaccurate information about you corrected or deleted while we are processing your data.

11. You have a right to have your personal data deleted while we are processing it.

12. You have a right to move your data from RCSI to somewhere else in a readable format while we are processing it.

13. Our research will not include any automated decision making.

14. You have a right to object to automated processing where applicable.

15. Beyond the use of your personal data to invite you to a focus group (and delete this once no longer needed), anonymisation and analysis of your focus group responses for our research, we have no further planned processing of your data.

16. Your data will be stored in the EU.

Where can I get further information?

If you have any further questions about the study or if you want to opt out of the study, you can rest assured it won't affect you in anyway.
If you need any further information now or at any time in the future, please contact:

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