***The Value of Health-Justice Partnerships***

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

This information sheet provides details of the research project taking place at the UCL Legal Advice Clinic at the Guttmann Health and Wellbeing Centre. Participating in the study is voluntary. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

**Who is organising and funding this study?**

The study is organised and funded by the Centre for Access to Justice, part of the University College London Faculty of Laws.

**Why are we doing this research?**

There has been a loss of free legal advice services in the UK. As a result, many people do not know where to go for help with legal issues. Legal problems like those with housing, debt and employment can be difficult to sort out and may impact on daily life. Our research will explore the impact of legal problems on everyday life, and the value of the legal advice you receive from the UCL Legal Advice Clinic in sorting out your legal problem. We hope this research may lead to more free legal advice being provided in GP practices around the country.

**What would taking part involve?**

1. Questionnaires

We will ask you to complete short questionnaires, which take 5-10 minutes. You will be asked to repeat these questionnaires 3 months and 6 months after beginning the study. Your answers to the questionnaires will be kept anonymous.

The questions ask about:

* + Your health-related quality of life
  + Your mental wellbeing
  + How often you visit the GP
  + Your normal smoking and drinking habits

We will also make a telephone call after 1 month to ask how your wellbeing has changed during that time.

1. Interviews

We may also invite you to take part in an interview. This is completely voluntary and would take about 30 minutes. Everything you say is confidential and will remain anonymous.

We will ask a selection of people to be interviewed, choosing participants from a broad range of backgrounds; for example, we will ask people from different age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and those with different types of legal problem.

Topics that will be covered during the interview:

* + How the legal problem has affected your daily life, including health and wellbeing
  + How things have changed for you since receiving legal advice
  + Your experiences of using the UCL Legal Advice Clinic

What the interview will involve:

* + A conversation with the researcher, who will ask a range of broad questions about your experiences. You do not have to talk about any topics you are uncomfortable with.
  + The interview will be tape recorded with your permission, for detail and clarity. This will be transcribed into written notes.
  + The interview will be kept anonymous and confidential. The records will be stored securely on protected UCL IT systems.

**What other information would we collect?**

* We will use information relating to your legal problem from the UCL Legal Advice Clinic. This information would be anonymous so you cannot be identified from it.
* We will ask the GP how frequently you have attended appointments in the months before and after your first legal advice session. This information would be anonymous so you cannot be identified from it.
* In order to contact you again during the study, we will need to view your contact details as provided to the UCL Legal Advice Clinic.

**How would we contact you?**

For you to complete the study, we will need to contact you during the next six months. Contact will be made by telephone and post. We will contact you to repeat the questionnaires, invite you to interviews and send you shopping vouchers and thank you letters.

**What are the benefits of taking part?**

Participation in the study is important to us. We will contact you twice to repeat questionnaires during the six months after starting the study, and will offer a £15 highstreet voucher in return on each occasion. If you decide to take part in an interview, you will also be given a £20 highstreet voucher as a thank you for your time.

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

Completing the questionnaires will take 5-10 minutes on each occasion.

If your experiences have been distressing, you might find it difficult to talk about them during an interview. There is no obligation to take part and you do not have to talk about any topics you are uncomfortable with.

**How will the information be kept confidential?**

All information about participants will be kept anonymous so that researchers looking at the data will not be able to identify any individuals. All information will be protected by a duty of confidence and non-disclosure agreements for all staff working on the study. Secure information systems are in place to ensure that study data are held in compliance with safety regulations.

**What will happen to the results of this study?**

Information you provide may be included anonymously in reports written about the UCL Legal Advice Clinic. These may be published as articles and presented at conferences. You would not be identifiable from any material that we publish.

After the study has finished, the research data will be archived securely according to the policies of University College London. Participant contact details will be deleted. Anonymised data may be used in future ethically-approved studies.

**What if you don't want to carry on with the study?**

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. In this case, a member of staff at the clinic should be notified using the contact details below.

**How will we ensure your safety?**

If you mention potential harm to yourself or others during the course of the study, the research team would need to contact the appropriate services and you would be supported by these services as well as by the UCL Legal Advice Clinic.

**What to do in the case of concerns:**

If you are concerned about any aspect of the study, please speak to a member of staff who will do their best to answer any questions. If you remain unhappy and you can make a formal complaint. University College London (UCL) holds insurance against claims from participants for harm caused by their participation in this study. Participants may be able to claim compensation if they can prove that UCL has been negligent. However, this study is being carried out in a General Practice, and the GP continues to have a duty of care to the participant of the study. University College London does not accept liability for any breach in the GP’s duty of care, or any negligence on the part of the General Practice employees.

**For further information or if you have any questions, please contact:**

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