



## *Ageing Well with Chronic Pain- Focus Group Interview*

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

#### **What is the Aim of the Project?**

The aim of the proposed study is to better understand the level of difficulty to activity and social participation due to chronic pain in an ageing population, so that we may work on better ways to promote healthy ageing in New Zealand.

#### **What Types of Participants are being sought?**

We wish to recruit adults aged 65 years and over, who have had pain for 3 months or more. You must be able to converse in English, and provide informed consent.

#### **What will Participants be asked to do?**

You will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion with around 6-8 other people who also experience chronic pain. We would like to hear about your pain, and how this affects your life. Each focus group will last for a maximum of one and half hours.

#### **What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?**

This project involves an open-questioning technique (a semi-structured interview). One of the investigators (Dr Catherine Smith) and the ARF/RA (Dr Poonam Mehta/tbc) will be involved in the Focus Group discussion either as a note-taker or moderator.

For the Dunedin region, the focus group interviews will be conducted in the Centre for Health, Activity, and Rehabilitation Research, School of Physiotherapy, University of Otago. For the Mosgiel region - Age Concern Mosgiel; for Alexandra - Age Concern Otago; and for Invercargill - Age Concern Southland will provide premises for focus groups (yet to be confirmed).

These focus groups discussions will include your thoughts about your chronic pain, how it impacts upon your level of activity and participation in the community, and what you think stops you from managing your pain?, or What helps you to manage your pain? Your response to the questions will be kept anonymous. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable, you may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

While there are no potential physical, mental or social risks for participants taking part in this study, it is possible that some participants may become distressed about being interviewed about ageing and chronic pain, and thus are advised to contact their GP in the first instance following the focus group. For all the included participants, contact no of next of kin will be obtained before the meeting.

Focus group interviews will be recorded with an audio recorder. The audio recordings will be transcribed word for word into word processing software and will be checked for accuracy by one of the other researchers from the team. We will also make notes to help us with the transcribing of the recording. The data gathered from this focus group discussion will be analysed for re-occurring themes: for example, what are your attitudes and beliefs about your pain; and how does chronic pain impact upon your level of activity, and community participation?

Every attempt will be made to preserve your confidentiality and anonymity. When you come to the focus group, you will be given a unique identification code and your contribution to the discussion will be given that code only. You may request a copy of the project results by ticking the box on the study consent form.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Personal identifying information [*e.g. paper records, and audio-tapes etc.*] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least ten years.

The results of the project may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings. At the same time the results will also be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand). In all publications and presentations, your anonymity will be preserved at all times.

### **Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

### **What if Participants have any Questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Dr Poonam Mehta,  
Assistant Research Fellow  
School of Physiotherapy  
University Tel:- 03 479 4863

and

Prof G. David Baxter, Director  
Ageing Well National Science Challenge  
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This study has been approved by the University of Otago Ethics Committee, reference number:” D17/248. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.