



University of  
Chester

## Participant Information Sheet

### **'An exploration of the role of paediatric bereavement care in the adaptive meaning-making of bereaved parents**

Dear

Thank you for indicating that you are interested in taking part in this research. This Information Sheet will hopefully explain what is involved, but if you need further clarification, then please do not hesitate to contact me using the contact details below.

#### **About me**

My name is Lesley Dougan; I am currently undertaking a Professional Doctorate in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies at the University of Chester. I am a qualified counsellor/psychotherapist and accredited member of BACP. I adhere to the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice for the Counselling Professions (BACP 2018) and the BACP Guidelines for Counselling Research (2018). I currently work as a bereavement counsellor in a service specialising in supporting anyone impacted by the death of a child, of any age, from pre-birth onwards.

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

This research is part of a Professional Doctorate in Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies / Psychological Trauma that I am undertaking at the University of Chester. I am interested in exploring your experience of the bereavement care support you and your family received when your child died.

My hope is that the research will give bereaved parents a voice; this, in turn, will increase awareness that the way bereavement care support is offered to families can have a significant impact on bereaved families' grieving process.

### **Am I able to take part?**

I am seeking participants who is a parent of a child who died before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and where the bereavement occurred over 12 months ago; additionally, those who accessed bereavement care when their child died. Participants will need to be sufficiently fluent in English to be interviewed.

Bereaved parents who are currently involved in a Coroner's process (even if bereaved longer than 12 months), or those who have a formal diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, are not able to be participants in this research.

### **What will happen to me if I take part?**

To enable this, if you decide to take part, I will contact you by email. This will give you the opportunity to ask me any questions about the research and enable me to arrange a time to interview you face-to-face at a neutral location close to your home, at your convenience. Your written consent will be obtained through the attached Consent form. Please be aware that the consent form includes questions about your child's date of birth and date of death. This crucial information will confirm that you meet the inclusion criteria for the research, and will help me to ensure that I do not arrange interviews close to significant dates for your family. The interview will be digitally recorded and last approximately 60 minutes.

<p><b>The interview will be semi-structured and be focussed around your experiences of the bereavement care you received at the time your child died.</b></p>
---

Once the interview is complete, the digital recording will be transcribed. Your transcript will be allocated a pseudonym or code to protect your anonymity, and any identifying features in the transcript will be deleted. I will email the transcript to you, so that you can check for accuracy. This will also give you an opportunity to amend or change any of the data. Your final written consent will be obtained, allowing me to begin the process of analysis of the data.

### **Your right to withdraw without prejudice**

You have every right to withdraw from the research at any time, without prejudice, up until the point that the thesis has begun to be written up. I will let you know when that is. Once the writing-up has begun, it will be impossible to remove your data as it will be integrated with other interviews, and your data will be more difficult to identify.

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

The research will be asking you questions about the support you and your family received when your child died. I recognise this may provoke powerful emotions, including distress. If,

for any reason, personal issues are stirred for you, I am an experienced therapist so I will do my best to support you in the time we are together.

I will signpost you to the Child Death Helpline, a listening service staffed by volunteers who are all bereaved parents. This helpline is open 365 days a year. I will also give you with a list of organisations who specialise in child bereavement, whom you may be able to access.

You will be able to 'pause' the interview and take as many breaks as necessary. You will be able to stop the interview process at any time and withdraw from the research.

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

This is an under-researched area and, therefore, it may serve to give bereaved parents and those who support acutely bereaved families a voice. Studies into the experiences of those who participate in bereavement research suggest that participants find the experience can be helpful, positive and therapeutic. In that sense, it could prove to be a powerful and helpful experience. The research may contribute to something more significant at research and policy level, informing the way bereaved parents are supported.

### **If you are unhappy**

I will do everything within my ability to ensure your safety and confidentiality. However, if you are not happy with any aspect of the research process, please raise it with me. If you are still not happy, you may raise it with my Research Supervisor, **Dr Andrew Reeves**, at the University of Chester:

<https://www.chester.ac.uk/sps/staff/dr-a-reeves>

If you are still unhappy with things, you may then raise it with the Executive Dean of Faculty, Professor David Balsamo: Email: [d.balsamo@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.balsamo@chester.ac.uk)

In the unlikely event that a participant is harmed by taking part in the research, there are no special compensation arrangements.

### **Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential, and how will my data be stored?**

The fact that you are taking part in the research, and everything that you share, will remain confidential. In the unlikely event that child protection issues are raised, I may have to alert Social Services or Police, but otherwise, what you share will form part of the data which will be anonymised by use of a pseudonym or code. The data will be stored securely in locked premises, and kept encrypted on a password protected computer. Only I, and my Research Supervisor, will have access to the data. The data will be destroyed (shredded or electronically deleted) after five years, in keeping with the data protection act.

All participants' details will be anonymised or pseudo-anonymised for the purpose of the research dissertation. However, I recognise that some participants may want to waive anonymity if this work is disseminated elsewhere.

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

The completed research will be stored (bound and electronic) at the University of Chester. The research will be disseminated in future publications and at conferences.

**Whom may I contact for further information?**

I, the researcher, am: Lesley Dougan

My contact details are: [l.dougan@chester.ac.uk](mailto:l.dougan@chester.ac.uk)

**Valid to:** Completion of Doctorate Study

*Thank you for your interest in this research.*