

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

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1. Study Title

Mental Health Literacy and Help Seeking Behaviour in Autism

2. Invitation to participate in study

You are being invited to participate in a research study about mental health literacy and help seeking in autistic people. Before you decide to participate in the study its important you read the reason for the study.

This study is anonymous so you will not need to give any identifying information. The anonymous results may be shared afterwards to contribute to research within mental health in the autistic population.

You must be 18 or older in order to participate in this research.

3. Do I have to participate?

Taking part in this research involves completing a questionnaire with questions about mental health, help seeking behaviour and your experiences. You do not have to participate in this study and can withdraw any time by not completing the questionnaire.

You will be asked for consent to participate in the study beforehand.

Mental health literacy – The knowledge and understanding needed to recognize, manage, and prevent mental health issues, and to promote mental well-being.

Help seeking behaviour – The act of actively seeking assistance or support from others, such as professionals, friends, or family to address mental health difficulties.

4. What is the reason for the study?

Research has shown many people experience mental health difficulties in the autistic population. Autistic people commonly report difficulties in seeking help from mental health services due to lack of autism awareness from health professionals.

This research will explore the mental health literacy of autistic people using the mental health literacy scale and help seeking behaviour.

5. Outcomes from study

My current role is a student researcher completing a master's in psychology. My background is also a learning disability and autism liaison nurse in an acute hospital. My experiences have shown mental health services struggle to meet the needs of autistic people, so I hope to share the findings of this study

afterwards to further the understanding of the barriers autistic people face in accessing help for their mental health.

6. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study will be written up for a dissertation and may be published in an academic journal or presented at a conference.

If the results will not be used then they will be deleted once the dissertation student has graduated.

They may also be used for future research on the topic. If this is the case then the data will be stored in a specialised data centre/repository relevant to this subject area for future research. All data collected from this research will be kept in keeping with the universities policy of academic integrity. This means all data will be stored in paper or electronic form for 10 years after the project is finished.

7. Risks of taking part

Discussions about mental health can be difficult and sometimes bring up uncomfortable feelings. Below is a list of resources you can go to if things get difficult. You can also stop participating in the survey at any point.

NHS Webpage on Mental Health <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/>

National Autistic Society Mental Health <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/mental-health>

MIND Autism and Mental Health <https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/our-policy-work/equality-and-human-rights/autism-and-mental-health/>

8. Who has reviewed this study?

This research is being conducted by a Psychology student at Oxford Brookes University as part of a requirement for their course. The study procedures have been reviewed and approved by the Psychology Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University. If you have any concerns about how the study has been conducted, please contact the Psychology Research Ethics Officer, Dr Clare Rathbone, on crathbone@brookes.ac.uk

9. Contact details

If you would like any further information, then you can contact me or my supervisor. The details are on top of this sheet.

If you would like a summary of the findings, please feel free to contact me.

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