



## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

**Project title: UHI Evaluation of the Community Link Worker Scheme in NHS Highland**

**Research department/team:** Division of Rural Health and Wellbeing, University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and NHS Highland Public Health.

### ***Invitation***

Thank you for taking time to read this information. We would like to invite you to take part in a research study about the Community Link Worker Scheme (CLW) in remote and rural areas of the Highlands. Before making any decision, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do. Please read the following information and feel free to contact us if anything is unclear or if you would like further information.

### ***Why is the research study taking place?***

Many GP practices across the Highlands can now refer patients to community link workers for support with other ways to help improve wellbeing. Community link workers spend time with the people referred and connect them with activities and groups within their community that could help improve their health and wellbeing. This is often known as a “social prescription”.

There has been some research into how Community Link Worker schemes work in urban areas, but we need to have a better understanding of how they can work well in remote and rural areas.

The aim of this research is to evaluate the Community Link Worker Scheme attached to rural GP practices in the Highlands. We will do this by collecting the experiences of a range of patients outlined below:

1. People who were referred to a CLW and have had their last appointment with their CLW.
2. People who were referred to the CLW but decided not to attend an appointment with them.
3. People who have seen their GP for a non-clinical need within the last 12 months but have not been referred to a CLW.

We are interested in hearing about these different experiences with the aim of assessing the impact of both taking part and not taking part in the Scheme. We will look at whether the Community Link worker Scheme is effective and whether it could be improved in any way.

***Why have I been asked to take part?***

You have been asked to take part because you were referred to and met a community link worker and you have now had your final appointment with your CLW.

***Do I have to take part?***

No. It is up to you whether to take part in this research. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without any consequences. If you decide not to take part, that's ok, it will not affect any activities that you are involved with as part of the CLW Scheme.

***If I agree to take part, what will I have to do?***

To take part you will need to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to the research team at UHI using the Freepost envelope provided. Alternatively, you can complete the questionnaire online following the instructions given on the front page of the questionnaire.

At the end of the questionnaire, you will be asked whether you would also like to speak with a member of the research team about your experiences. If you would like to, there are two different ways of giving us your contact details shown at the end of the questionnaire. These are either by writing them in the place shown or by using an online option. A researcher would then contact you to give you information about what it would involve and answer any questions. If you wish to go ahead, the researcher will arrange a convenient time to talk to you by phone, video call or in person. We will aim for this to happen within 1 month after we receive your contact details. During your time with the researcher they will ask you what you thought of the programme and working with the CLW. It will last between 30 and 60 minutes. You can stop at any time. You can refuse to answer any questions we ask. You can have someone else with you when you talk to the researcher if you wish. With your permission, the session will be audio-recorded to keep an accurate record of what has been said. If we're using a video call, we will not record video, only sound using a separate recording device. You can switch off your camera any time.

***How will my answers be used?***

UHI researchers will analyse the anonymised data given in the questionnaire. If you have been interviewed as well, the interview recording will be turned into a text document or transcript. You can ask for a copy. The interview information will be analysed by researchers to pick out themes which will be written up in a report about the project. The report and research information may be used in articles for academic journals, conferences and presentations, but you will not be identified. Any quotations will be anonymous.

***What will happen to my personal information?***

All the personal information we collect will be kept confidential. UHI has strict rules to make sure that all information collected is safely stored and does not reveal personal information about you. All questionnaire data, research information, recordings, transcripts and consent forms will be kept securely on SharePoint, UHI's electronic filing system. Only the researchers will have access to them. Personal information such as your name and contact details will be destroyed after the evaluation has finished.

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

There are no direct benefits of taking part, however the research may help in making decisions on the future funding of CLW schemes and so benefit other people who need support.

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

There are no foreseeable risks associated with the research. The interviews are for research purposes only and will have no bearing on your individual health or wellbeing. If you do feel uncomfortable, upset or threatened in any way during an interview, please let the researcher know and he/she will stop the interview and sign-post you to further support.

**Who is carrying out and funding this research?**

The evaluation is being led by Professor Sarah-Anne Muñoz, Acting Head of the Division of Rural Health and Wellbeing at UHI. The Community Link Worker evaluation is being funded by the Chief Scientist's Office (CSO).

**What if I want to withdraw from the evaluation?**

You can contact your community link worker or Prof Munoz (contact details below) at any time. If you have said that you will talk with one of our researchers, you can tell the researcher before or during your talk that you want to withdraw.

**What if I have questions or want further information?**

If you have any questions or want further information, please contact Prof Sarah-Anne Munoz by email Sarah-Anne.Munoz@uhi.ac.uk or call 01463 279885.

If you have a query that you feel cannot be addressed by the research team, please contact the UHI Research Office Administrator: Tel 01463 279000, email: [ro@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:ro@uhi.ac.uk)

**Thank you for taking the time to consider taking part in this research. Your contribution to the project is greatly appreciated. Please keep this information sheet.**

If you need support with any of the issues raised by taking part in the evaluation here are details of some organisations where you can talk to someone

- The Samaritans helpline is 116 123 and is open 24 hours, 7 days a week. Calls can be made anytime, from any phone. All calls are confidential.
- Breathing Space Scotland <https://breathingspace.scot/> have a free, confidential, phone service for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. The line is open Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am and Weekends: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am - All calls are confidential - 0800 83 85 87
- If your GP is not available, you can call NHS24 by dialling 111.

## **Data Privacy Notice: UHI Evaluation of Community Link Workers in NHS Highland.**

The Data Controller of the information being collected is The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), Executive Office, 12B Ness Walk, Inverness IV3 5SQ. Phone: 01463 279000.

For any queries or concerns about how your personal data is being processed you can contact the relevant Data Protection Officer at [dataprotectionofficer@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotectionofficer@uhi.ac.uk)

This privacy statement relates to the use of information provided to us through questionnaires, interviews and by NHS Highland. The questionnaire is part of an evaluation of the Community Link Worker (CLW) scheme within the NHS Highland health board area. As part of the evaluation NHS Highland will share data with the evaluation team at the University of the Highlands and Islands. This data will show how often you see your GP.

Your information will be used for the purposes of evaluating a community link worker scheme in the NHS Highland health Board area.

~The lawful basis for processing personal data is that it is necessary for the evaluation of the community link worker scheme. Thus, • use is necessary for the performance a task in the public interest (with a basis in law) or under official authority vested in us (public task). In this case the undertaking of research by the University in keeping with the University's public task. This public task includes the planning, delivery, and communication of research. Research includes conducting the research and taking all required steps to ensure the safety, validity and academic integrity of the research. It may also include re-use of the research data for further research, storage for later inspection, auditing and archiving

The data being used includes information about your health (physical health, mental wellbeing) and social networks. Some of this data is considered special category (sensitive) data. We use this sensitive data only if the following legal conditions have been met: Processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. That purpose being the undertaking of research by the University.

For further information about the lawful basis for NHS Highland using and sharing personal information please see the NHS Highland Privacy Statement which can be found at [www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Pages/YourRights.aspx](http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Pages/YourRights.aspx)

Your data will or may be shared with the following recipients or categories of recipients:

- The University of the Highlands and Islands and its [Academic Partner Organisations](#), including
- Relevant UHI exam boards comprising UHI and external representatives.
- All individuals to whom UHI considers access should be granted for academic integrity, safety and safeguarding, marking, audit, records management, library, archiving, and quality assurance purposes (and to ensure all data is handled, and research conducted, in keeping with UHI's policies and procedures). The parties

may include UHI staff, contractors or selected external individuals. Such access will only be used as necessary.

- Data may be handled by UHI, or academic partner, ICT or records management staff who are required to undertake actions to keep the data safe, maintain data integrity, or ensure the data is handled and secured in keeping with UHI's data policies and procedures. The parties may include UHI staff, contractors or selected external individuals. Such access will only be used as necessary.
- For any questions about data sharing please contact the research supervisor or principal investigator listed in this document.
- Lime Survey for the purposes of completion of the online survey.

The following are your rights in respect of this processing:

- The right to withdraw consent if consent is our lawful basis for processing your data in this privacy notice
- The right to access your personal data
- The right to rectification if the personal data we hold about you is incorrect
- The right to restrict processing of your personal data
- The right to request erasure (deletion) of your personal data
- The right to data portability
- You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office about our handling of your data.