**Participant Information Sheet**

**05/11/20 Version 1.2**

**Study title:** Investigating the role of perspective taking in social anxiety during videoconferencing

**Project Lead:** Dr Nathan Huneke

**Supervisors**: Prof Matthew Garner, Prof David Baldwin

**Other researchers:** Alex McEwan

**ERGO number**: 61411

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will need to tick that you consent at the bottom of this page.

**What is the research about?**

Anxiety disorders are the most common psychiatric disorder and because they typically result in impairment of daily life, are among the most burdensome of medical conditions. Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD) is a common anxiety disorder, yet it is often not diagnosed or treated properly. Patients who suffer from SAD experience excessive anxiety and worry about social or performance situations, particularly where the person is exposed to potential scrutiny or unfamiliar people.

Since the covid-19 pandemic, many of our social interactions have moved online. Evidence suggests that even these online interactions can cause significant worry and anxiety for patients with SAD. In this study, we will explore how the use of videoconferencing software might influence social anxiety. We will also explore whether a newly developed psychological treatment for social anxiety disorder can be delivered quickly, remotely, and effectively. This study will take place entirely online.

We are recruiting male and female volunteers, aged between 18 and 45 years, who experience anxiety in social situations.

**Why have I been asked to participate?**

You have been invited to participate since you have enquired about our advertised studies.

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

After you have read this information sheet, you will be asked to give consent, so that we know you understand the study and wish to participate.

There are three parts to this study:

1. **Pre-screening**

To check whether you meet our threshold for social anxiety, we will ask you to complete a pre-screening questionnaire that asks about your thoughts and feelings regarding social interaction.

1. **Screening**

If you meet our threshold for social anxiety, then we will ask you to complete an online screening questionnaire to check you are eligible for the remainder of the study. The questionnaire will ask specific questions about your physical and mental health. You should be generally healthy and have no present mental health complaints other than social anxiety disorder. You should not have received any new treatments, either medication or talking therapy, in the past 8 weeks. If you meet our list of entry criteria, then you will be invited to a testing session.

1. **Testing Session (Approximately 30 minutes)**

This session will also take place entirely online.

At the beginning of the session, you will complete some questionnaires that ask about your physical and mental health. You will then either receive our new therapy or you will watch a control video of the same length. After this you will engage in a brief social interaction using videoconferencing software. This interaction will be recorded. You will then complete some more questionnaires to assess your mood and anxiety following this interaction.

Before you agree to participate you will have the opportunity to review this information.

**Are there any benefits in my taking part?**

Psychology students at the University of Southampton will receive 1 course credit for completing the pre-screening questionnaire. If eligible, psychology students at the University of Southampton will be given a further 9 course credits on completion of the rest of the study. Beyond this you should not expect to directly benefit from taking part in this research study. Participants not eligible to receive credits will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this research. However, the information we obtain from this study might help us to understand and treat patients with anxiety disorders in the future.

**Are there any risks involved?**

Participants who meet any of the exclusion criteria should not take part in the study. The screening procedure will ask participants some questions about their physical and mental health. Information about local support services will be available to any participant that is concerned about their physical and mental wellbeing.

We will be asking you to participate in a social interaction and this might cause you some mild anxiety. The interaction will be brief and we will check on your wellbeing on completion of this task. You will be able to stop at any time should you wish to end the conversation.

**What data will be collected?**

As part of the screening process, we will collect personally identifiable information including date of birth, gender identity, e-mail address and medical history. We collect this information to ensure that the study groups are reasonably balanced in terms of demographics and to ensure that you are eligible to participate in the study. This information will be stored in an electronic database. We also collect your contact details so that we can maintain contact with you during the study, and to make any necessary follow up contacts. We will not retain your contact details for future studies.

During the testing session we will collect data on current mood and anxiety from questionnaires. We will also record the social interaction for qualitative analyses. These data will be stored in an electronic database. All data will be anonymised prior to analysis.

All electronic databases containing personally identifiable information will be encrypted and password-protected.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team (including supervisors) and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to give consent at the bottom of this page to show you have agreed to take part.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason. If you withdraw before you complete the study then you will not receive the 9 course credits. If you withdraw from the study, you can request that we destroy the data we have gathered about you up until we have entered it into our secure database and begun analysis (approximately September 2021).

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

When the study has been completed, we shall analyse the data and report the findings. This will be reported in an appropriate scientific journal or presented at a scientific meeting. Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent. If you would like a copy of the final paper, you may request this.

Once the project is complete, all data will be transferred and stored in the University Research Repository. We will seek your consent to store the data openly under the open science framework. Your data will be held in an anonymised form and unlinked to any personal identifiable information. This allows other researchers to use the data for future research without being able to identify you. Data will be stored here for a minimum of 15 years.

**Where can I get more information?**

For further queries, please contact Dr Nathan Huneke ([n.huneke@soton.ac.uk](mailto:n.huneke@soton.ac.uk), tel: 02382 310 775).

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 15 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@soton.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@soton.ac.uk)).

**Thank you.**