**Online Participant Information Sheet and Consent form**

**Study Title:** An investigation of moral injury, trauma and compassion in frontline healthcare professionals.

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**Ethics/ERGO no:** 80865

**IRAS no:** 326267

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**What is the research about?**

My name is Kathryn McAree and I am currently completing the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsych) at the University of Southampton. This research is part of my doctoral thesis investigating moral injury, trauma, psychological distress, and compassion in frontline healthcare professionals.

Moral injury can occur when someone engages in, fails to prevent, or witnesses acts that conflict with their values or beliefs and when they experience betrayal by trusted others especially when this is perceived as avoidable, or they are powerless to change it. Research suggests that compassion for the self and others is a resilience factor to moral injury. This research is interested in the relationship between moral injury, trauma, psychological distress, and compassion in frontline healthcare staff.

This study was approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) at the University of Southampton (Ethics/ERGO Number: *80865*

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

This study is hoping to recruit individuals self-identifying as frontline healthcare professionals who are currently working in a patient facing role *and* worked in a patient facing role during the COVID-19 pandemic. You have been asked to participate because you responded to an advertisement regarding participation in this study and you may meet the full eligibility criteria outlined below.

**Eligibility Criteria**

***Inclusion Criteria:***

You are eligible to participate in this study if you currently work as a frontline healthcare professional and have direct patient contact. You must have worked in a patient facing role during the COVID-19 pandemic. You will need to have been employed for at least six months, be over the age of 18 years and have internet access to access online questionnaires. The online questionnaires are also mobile friendly. You will need to have a good level of English to understand the online questionnaires. If you can read through this information sheet and understand the consent statements below, your English is considered sufficient.

***Exclusion Criteria:***

Unfortunately, if you are currently participating in a compassion focused intervention for yourself at the time of this study, you will not be eligible to participate in the study as this could affect the conclusions made in the study. You will also not be eligible to participate in this study if you have difficulty understanding or speaking English or do not have internet access. This is because this study is an online-based study and the study materials will be presented in English, without translation or the use of interpreters being possible. However, if you have been able to read to this point, you will be considered to have sufficient English to be eligible to provide informed consent to participate in this study.

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

There are two parts to this study (Parts A and B). You have the ***option*** to consent to participate in just Part A or both Parts A and B. If you complete Part A, you also have the ***option*** to consent to be entered into a prize draw to win one of 5 £10 Amazon gift vouchers as a thank you for your participation. If you complete Part A and Part B, you have the ***option*** to consent to be entered into a prize draw to win one of 10 £25 Amazon gift vouchers as a thank you for participation.

**Part A**: If you decide to take part in this part of the study, you will be asked some demographical questions and will complete some questionnaires which will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. We are interested in staff psychological wellbeing and our questionnaires will consist of questions to measure levels of compassion towards yourself, towards others and from others. Questionnaires will also measure depression, anxiety, trauma, and moral injury. We are also interested in whether early childhood experiences may impact on current mental wellbeing and there will be a questionnaire measuring adverse childhood experiences.

You will then be asked whether you would like to consent to participate in Part B of the study. If not, your participation in the study will end here.

**Part B**: If you decide to participate in this part of the study as well, you will be randomly allocated to either a 2-week Compassionate Mind Training (CMT practices) group or a control group.

***(B) If you are in the Compassionate Mind training group:*** you will be sent a link to an online 20-minute psychoeducational recording introducing, you to the Compassionate Mind Training (CMT) Practices. You will then be asked to listen to a brief audio recorded CMT practice each day for two weeks. These will last no longer than 20minutes. An automatic reminder email to complete the CMT practice will be sent to the email address you provide daily. After the 2-week training period you will be sent a link to repeat the questionnaires you completed in Part A again (excluding the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire). You will then be sent a debrief statement.

***(B) If you are in the control group*:** you will be sent an invite to repeat the questionnaires from Part A 2-weeks after the first time you completed them. After you have completed the questionnaires, you will be sent a link to access the online CMT training . You will then be sent a debriefing statement.

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

You will have access to a brief training programme that you may find beneficial for your psychological wellbeing. Your participation will help improve our current understanding of moral injury, trauma, early childhood experiences and psychological distress and improve the interventions aimed at reducing moral injury and psychological distress and increasing compassion for frontline healthcare professionals.

Upon your completion of **Part A** of the study, you have the option to enter a prize draw to win **one of 5 £10 Amazon gift vouchers** to say thank you for participating in this study. Upon completion of both **Part A and Part B** of the study, you have the option to enter a prize draw to win **one of 10 £25 Amazon gift vouchers** to say thank you for participating.

**Are there any risks involved?**

There are no major risks of participating in this study, although some of the questions in the questionnaires and the training may temporarily increase some temporary emotional discomfort and a heightened awareness of uncomfortable feelings (i.e., moral injury and experiences from childhood and at work). Any discomfort should be temporary, however, if you become too uncomfortable while participating, you are able to withdraw from the study at any point. Also, if you feel any distress at any point in the study and would like some support, you are able to contact the following:

* **Registered GP**
* **Call 111:** If you need help urgently for your mental health, but it's not an emergency
* **Local A&E department:** If you or someone's life is at risk, or you do not feel you can keep yourself or someone else safe
* **Samaritans**:

Call: 116 123.

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Website: <https://www.samaritans.org>

* **MIND**:  Provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

Call: 0300 123 3393.

Text: 86463 *(Monday-Friday 9am – 6pm)*

Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

Website: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

* **FRONTLINE 19:** A Confidential Psychological Support Service For people working in the NHS & frontline services in the UK

Email: [contact@frontline19.com](mailto:contact@frontline19.com)

* **SHOUT:** A free, confidential, anonymous text support service. You can text from wherever you are in the UK.

Text: ‘SHOUT’ to 85258

Website: <https://giveusashout.org/>

* **NHS Urgent Mental Health Helpline**: 24-hour advice and support for you, your child, your parent or someone you care for. Click the link below to find the nearest contact:

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>

* **Practitioner Health:** Practitioner Health is a free, confidential NHS primary care mental health and addiction service with expertise in treating health & care professionals.

Website: <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/contact>

Email: [prac.health@nhs.net](http://nhs.net/)

Call: [0300 0303 300](tel:03000303300)f

**What information will be collected, and will my participation be confidential?**

Demographic information such as your age, gender, ethnicity, questions about your professional role, years of clinical experience, whether your role is full-time/part-time/voluntary, will be collected. You will also be asked for your email address, which will be kept separately, and password protected. This will be used to send study reminders, maintain contact during the study and to match you to your data across the time points for the analyses.

Your participation in this study, data, and the information we collect about you during the research will be kept **strictly confidential**. Only members of the research team 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 of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

All data will be stored securely on a password protected document in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and the University of Southampton policy and will be destroyed after 10 years. Details provided for the prize draw will be destroyed once the draw has taken place. Signed consent forms will be stored in a form protected by a password and Qualtrics' high-level data security processes and technologies. All participants will be sent a copy of their completed consent form.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part.

**If you decide you want to take part:**  you will need to check the consent box at the bottom of this form to show you have agreed to take part. If you consent to take part, a copy of your consent will then be emailed to you. You can decide if you want to do Part A (Questionnaires only) **OR** Parts A and B (Questionnaires and random allocation to compassionate mind training). It is also up to you whether you want to be entered into the prize draw.

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

Your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason during the study. You can withdraw your survey responses up to the submission of the survey by closing the survey window. You will not be able to withdraw your data after submission of your responses. This applies to each section of the study (Parts A and B). If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the demographic information about your professional role to explore in the analyses whether there are any group differences in those participating and those withdrawing.

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

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. It is possible that de-identified results of this research will be reported as part of a larger research program, published in a peer-reviewed academic journal and/or published as part of the open science framework, disseminated in staff newsletters/social media accounts of participating Trusts/organisations, and presented at conferences. The research findings made available in any reports, publications or presentations will **not** include any information that can directly identify you. As per the University of Southampton policy, the data will be stored for a period of 10 years, and it will be permanently destroyed after this time.

If you would like to receive a copy of the study results, please check the relevant box below.

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

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the Chief Investigators or the research team 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).

If you remain unhappy about any aspect of this study and would like to make a formal complaint, you can contact the Head of Research Integrity and Governance, University of Southampton, on the following contact details: Email: [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk), phone: + 44 2380 595058.

Please quote the Ethics/ERGO number above. Please note that by making a complaint you might be no longer anonymous.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you have any questions of require further information after reading this information sheet, please do not hesitate to contact the Chief Investigator:

– Kathryn McAree at [Kma1n21@soton.ac.uk](mailto:Kma1n21@soton.ac.uk)

**Contact details of the research team**

Research Supervisors

Dr David Beattie, [d.beattie@soton.ac.uk](mailto:d.beattie@soton.ac.uk)

Dr Margo Ononaiye, [m.s.ononaiye@soton.ac.uk](mailto:m.s.ononaiye@soton.ac.uk)

The University of Southampton is the sponsor for the study and the data controller.

More information on your rights as a study participant is available via this link:

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/participant-information.page>

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and considering taking part in this research.**

**CONSENT FORM FOR PART A**

If you wish to participate in **Part A** of thestudy, please check the consent box below. A copy of your consent will then be emailed to you. By checking the box, you are consenting that:

1. You have read and understood the above information and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
2. You agree to take part in this research project and agree for your data to be used for the purpose of this study.
3. You understand your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time during the data collection period without your legal rights being affected.
4. You understand that should you withdraw from the study then the demographic information collected about you may still be used for the purposes analysing any group differences in those participating and withdrawing from the study.
5. You understand you will not be directly identified in any reports of the research

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to participating in Part A of the study (Questionnaires only).

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to be entered into a prize draw to win one of 5 £10 Amazon gift vouchers at the end of your participation in Part A; this is optional.

Please check this box to indicate that you would like to receive the findings of this project; this is optional.

**After PART A has been completed**

**CONSENT FORM FOR PART B**

**Thank you for your participation in Part A. If you would like take part in compassionate mind training that may help with psychological wellbeing (Part B), please check the consent box below. A copy of your consent will then be emailed to you.**

If you decide to participate in this part of the study as well, you will be randomly allocated to either a 2-week Compassionate Mind Training (CMT practices) group or a control group.

By ticking the box, you are consenting that:

1. You have read and understood the above information and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
2. You agree to take part in this research project and agree for your data to be used for the purpose of this study.
3. You understand your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time during the data collection period without your legal rights being affected.
4. You understand that should you withdraw from the study then the demographic information collected about you may still be used for the purposes analysing any group differences in those participating and withdrawing from the study.
5. You understand you will not be directly identified in any reports of the research

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to participating in Part B of the study (compassionate mind training or waitlist control)

Please check this box to indicate that would like to receive the findings of this project; this is optional

Please check this box to indicate that you consent to be entered into a prize draw to win one of 10 £25 Amazon gift vouchers at the end of your participation in Part B; this is optional.

**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 10 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)).

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