

Participant Name  
Organisation  
First line address  
Second line address  
City  
Post code

Jenny Hopkins  
PhD Research Student  
Email: s4007520@glos.ac.uk

17/03/2021

Dear Name

## RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION DOCUMENT

### Study Title

How public sector contracting for services affects local deaf charities in England.

### Invitation

I am currently studying for a PhD at the University of Gloucestershire and I would like to invite you to take part in the above research study. Before you decide, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read this information and discuss it with others if you wish. If there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information, please contact me at the email address given at the top of the page.

### What is the purpose of the study?

For some years, the public sector has been engaging charities contractually to help deliver parts of our health and social welfare services. For deaf charities, that provides opportunities in areas like BSL interpreting, supporting deaf people at home and at work, hearing aid maintenance and listening aid equipment. This engagement has involved measures to encourage a new kind of professionalism in charities, but it also sometimes presents a conflict of interest, when the requirements of the funder do not always match the needs of the service user. The aim of this project is to shine a light on the extent to which different local deaf charities in England have adapted, or had change forced upon them, because of the shift towards contract funding. As a former CEO of a local deaf charity myself, I have a particular interest in the topic and first-hand experience of the issues at stake. This is not a research study about deafness or the Deaf community as such; rather, it is about the local organisations which exist to support this cause. Local deaf charities are a particular type of organisation, for the most part staffed by and serving a minority and marginalised people with their own language and culture. Do they feel more keenly the opportunities and challenges presented by contract funding? Key themes to explore will be the effect on relationships: with commissioners, with service users and particularly local Deaf communities, and with other deaf charities.

### Why have I been invited?

You are being invited to take part in the research study if you fit into one or more of the following  
*continues to next page...*

*/continued from previous page*

categories and your work is primarily based in England:

- You are a senior manager at a local deaf charity.
- You are a senior manager at a for-profit BSL-interpreting agency.
- Your role includes writing contract bids.
- You are a BSL interpreter.
- You are a commissioner of health or social care services relating to deaf and hard of hearing people.

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

You do not have to take part. Taking part is entirely voluntary. In addition, you can withdraw if you later change your mind, without giving a reason.

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

- Your charity and its trustees will benefit from the deeper understanding that comes from this research investigation and it may assist you in directing the future of your organisation.
- Your contribution will add to the knowledge of policy makers involved in commissioning health and social care contracts at both national and local level. The role of local deaf charities is an under-served topic in academic research.

### **Will I be reimbursed for taking part?**

Your participation is voluntary and there is no reimbursement for taking part, other than travel expenses. The research student will be responsible for BSL interpreter costs and, where possible, will commit to booking that facility through the deaf organisation associated with the participant being interviewed. In this way, there will be a payment going to each of the participating deaf charities.

### **My preferred language is BSL**

Information will be gathered in BSL or English, whichever is your preference. Fully qualified BSL interpreters will be used during all interviews.

### **What happens if I decide to take part?**

The information-gathering part of this PhD research study will take place over the next three years. If you decide to become involved, you will be asked to take part in the following:

- *One-to-one interviews.* You will be invited to one, two or three interviews over the course of the study, and these will start from Spring 2021. Each interview will last up to an hour and a half.
- *Online forum discussions.* You will be invited to contribute posts to themed discussions related to the research study. You will be able to access the forum via the dedicated website at [www.phdresearchproject.org](http://www.phdresearchproject.org)

*continues to next page...*

*/continued from previous page*

### **What kind of questions will I be asked?**

If you are the senior manager of a deaf organisation, below is a list of the sort of questions that will be asked at the first interview:

1. What is your career background?
2. What are the services and activities your organisation offers?
3. How is each service or activity funded, and how much of your organisation's income comes from contracts?
4. How does your organisation identify a contract opportunity?
5. What is the process you go through to make a contract bid?
6. Have you detected any change in commissioning over recent years?
7. Whom do you see as your main competitors?
8. How do you think the COVID-19 pandemic might affect future commissioning?
9. How well do you think deaf organisations work together?
10. How do you see the future role of local deaf charities?

If you are a senior manager not involved directly in writing contract bids, a BSL interpreter or a commissioner, the questions will be adapted, although along similar themes.

### **What about confidentiality?**

- None of the information collected during interviews will be shared with other participants.
- You will be assigned a nickname/User ID for the website forum discussions.
- After information is collected, it will be de-identified. Neither you nor your organisation will be identifiable in any published work arising from this study.

### **Are there any risks from taking part?**

The well-being of participants is a priority and the study will not adversely affect you or your organisation's reputation in any way.

### **Can I change what I have said during an interview?**

Your interview(s) will be recorded and then transcribed, and you will have a chance to check the transcript. You can correct or expand on any part you are not happy with, provided you do so within 6 weeks of the transcription being sent to you and before it is de-identified.

### **What if I want to withdraw from the study?**

You can withdraw your involvement in the research at any time and without reason. However, any data that has been collected and de-identified up to your withdrawal will be used in the study.

### **What will happen to my data?**

Your data will be stored and archived with the University of Gloucestershire in accordance with its Privacy Policy for Research Participants (available in BSL and English through the website [www.phdresearchproject.org](http://www.phdresearchproject.org)) and will comply with GDPR (2018).

*continues to next page...*

*/continued from previous page*

- Your information will be used in order to undertake this study. Research is a task that is performed in the public interest. The University of Gloucestershire, as sponsor, is the data controller and responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.
- Identifiable information about you will be kept to a minimum and archived until the study has finished (approx. 5 years).
- The de-identified research data and any research documents with personal information, such as signed consent forms, will be stored securely at the University of Gloucestershire after the end of the study as part of the research record.
- Your rights to access, change, or move your personal information may be limited when the data is being used for research purposes. Once the information has been irreversibly de-identified or anonymised and becomes part of the research data set, it will not be possible to access your personal information.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

Any study involving vulnerable groups is looked at by an independent group of academics, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect participants' interests. This study was reviewed and approved by the University of Gloucestershire Research Ethics Committee in February/March 2021.

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

If you wish to complain or have concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, you should contact the research supervisor or Research Ethics Committee Chair, whose contact details are given at the end of this document.

### **How long will the study take and what happens when the study is completed?**

The duration of this study is anticipated to be 5 years. On successful completion, the thesis will be published in a timely manner and made accessible for peer review.

### **How will I know when the study is completed?**

When the study has been completed, you will be notified and told what it has helped the researcher find out. You will be offered the opportunity of having a presentation on the research study delivered to your charity board of trustees and senior management.

Thank you for reading this information and for considering taking part in the study.

Kind regards,

Jenny Hopkins, PhD Research Student

### **Additional contacts:**

1. **Research Supervisor:** Dr Paul Vare. Email: [pvar@glos.ac.uk](mailto:pvar@glos.ac.uk)
2. **Research Ethics Committee Chair:** Dr Emily Ryall. Email: [eryall@glos.ac.uk](mailto:eryall@glos.ac.uk)