

# Participant Information Statement and Consent Form: Consultations with Sector Professionals



**Title:** Responding to victim-survivors with experience of family violence and sexual harm: Consultations with Sector Professionals

**Chief Investigator:** Dr Anastasia Powell, RMIT University

**Associate Investigator/s:** Dr Gemma Hamilton, Dr Lisa Harris and Professor Georgina Heydon, RMIT University

## Introduction

You have been invited to take part in this research project, 'Responding to victim-survivors with experience of family violence and sexual harm'. You have been invited due to your professional experience working in either the family violence or sexual violence support sector.

This Participant Information and Consent Form tells you about the research project. It explains the processes involved with taking part. Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you decide you want to take part in the research project, you will be asked to sign the consent section. By signing it you are telling us that you: Understand what you have read, and Consent to take part in the research project. You will be given a copy of this Participant Information and Consent Form to keep.

## What is the purpose of this research?

Sector expertise has long acknowledged that family violence and sexual harm often co-occur. Victoria has undertaken a substantial process of sector wide reform to improve services, responses, safety and prevention for those impacted by family violence. One of the components of this reform initiative is the implementation of co-located services for family violence and allied response agencies, including sexual assault services. This research is funded by Family Safety Victoria and seeks to understand the experiences and support needs of these victim survivors, in order to inform the ongoing development of Victoria's family violence response.

## What does participation in this research involve?

If you decide to take part in the research project, you will be asked to participate in an interview with one of the named researchers from RMIT University by either Microsoft Teams or by phone, at a time convenient to you. We anticipate the interview will take up to 1 hour. One of our research team will email or call you to arrange the interview, and we will ask you to read and sign the consent form prior to your involvement in the research.

The interviewer will ask you questions about your professional experience regarding the nature of co-occurring family violence and sexual harm; its impacts on victim-survivors; the support and justice needs of victim-survivors; as well as the barriers and enablers of effective responses. The researcher will audio-record the interview for transcription and data analysis. No individuals or organisations will be identified in the analysis or reporting of this research. You will be given an option to receive a copy of your transcript for review. If you decide to take up this option, the researchers' will provide you with a secure copy of your interview transcript and invite any edits within 14 days, after which data analysis will proceed. The results will be published in reports to Family Safety Victoria, webinars and presentations, as well as publication in academic sources such as journals and/or books.

## Who is organising and funding the research?

The research has been funded by Family Safety Victoria, a department of the State Government of Victoria which leads many of the government's family violence reforms. The research is being overseen and conducted by Associate Professor Anastasia Powell, Dr Gemma Hamilton, Dr Lisa Harris and Professor Georgina Heydon (RMIT University). Family Safety Victoria will not have access to any unprocessed data from this research.

**Do I have to take part in this research project?**

Participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the research team, RMIT University or Family Safety Victoria.

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

We cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any personal benefits from this research; however, you may appreciate contributing to research that seeks to inform the ongoing development of Victoria's family violence response.

**What are the risks and disadvantages of taking part?**

Given your professional expertise in providing services to victim-survivors of family and/or sexual violence, we do not anticipate that there will be risk of distress to you personally. However, if you do feel that some of the questions are stressful or upsetting, you are welcome to skip any question, or to pause or stop the interview at any time. There is also a risk that research interview data could be subject to legal subpoena by a court. In order to protect the confidentiality of participants and clients, we will not ask you to disclose any potentially client-identifying information in the interview. Should identifying information begin to be disclosed, we will pause the interview recording and ensure such information is deleted from our records.

**What if I withdraw from this research project?**

If you decide to take part and then change your mind, you can cancel the interview or contact the researchers to have the data that you provided removed from the study up until such time that the data has been analysed for reporting to Family Safety Victoria or for other publication.

**What happens when the research project ends?**

Once the data collection is completed, all interview data will be analysed and written-up into a research report and other publications. It is anticipated that a final research report of the results will be submitted to Family Safety Victoria in June 2023, and will be publicly available in the months afterwards. Links to the report will also be available via the Family Safety Victoria and/or RMIT websites, or you may contact the researchers to request a copy be emailed to you. It is also possible that the results will be reported in other reports, conferences, presentations and/or academic publications.

**What will happen to information about me?**

Data collected during this stage of the research will be stored on a secure computer system by RMIT University, and will be held electronically by the research team for a period of five years before being destroyed, in line with *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007).

**Who has reviewed the research project?**

This research project has been approved by the RMIT University HREC. This project will be carried out according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007). This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

**Further information and who to contact**

If you want any further information concerning this project, or have any questions that have not been addressed in this information statement, you can contact members of the research team below.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Name      | Dr Anastasia Powell  |
| Position  | Associate Professor Criminology & Justice Studies, RMIT University |
| Telephone | +61 3 9925 3566  |
| Email     | anastasia.powell@rmit.edu.au                                       |

**Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or questions about this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the researchers listed in this document, then you may contact:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Reviewing HREC name | RMIT University  |
| HREC Secretary      | Peter Burke  |
| Telephone           | +61 3 9925 2251  |
| Email               | <a href="mailto:human.ethics@rmit.edu.au">human.ethics@rmit.edu.au</a>             |
| Mailing address     | Research Ethics Co-ordinator<br>RMIT University. GPO Box 2476. MELBOURNE VIC 3001. |

## Consent Form

**Title:** Responding to victim-survivors with experience of family violence and sexual harm: Consultations with Service Sector Professionals

**Chief Investigator:** Dr Anastasia Powell, RMIT University

**Associate Investigator/s:** Dr Gemma Hamilton, Dr Lisa Harris and Professor Georgina Heydon, RMIT University

### **Acknowledgement by Participant**

I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand the purposes, procedures and risks of the research described in the project.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the project without affecting my relationship with RMIT.

I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this document to keep.

I would like to receive a transcript of my interview to review prior to its analysis by the researchers (please tick to indicate your response):

No [ ☐ ]

Yes [ ☐ ]

Name of Participant (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Declaration by Researcher\***

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project; its procedures and risks and I believe that the participant has understood that explanation.

Name of Researcher\* (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* An appropriately qualified member of the research team must provide the explanation of, and information concerning, the research project. Note: All parties signing the consent section must date their own signature.