

**To: Victim-survivor participants**

## **Participant Information Sheet**

**Project Title:** Family Violence Crisis Continuum: Articulating and sharing best practice in a family violence emergency

**Project ID:** Ethics approval number 2022-03

**Chief Investigator:** Dr Yee Man Louie  
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You are invited to take part in a research study with Dr Yee Man Louie and Tammy Wallace at Safe Steps. To participate in this study, you need to give your informed consent. Informed consent means you understand what this study is about, the potential risks of participating, and your rights and protections. This document gives information that is important for this understanding. Please take as much time as you need to decide if you want to participate. You do not have to participate, and you can stop participating without consequences. You can ask questions at any time.

### **What is the Purpose of This Study?**

The purpose of the study is to explore how best practices for emergency responses can be applied across the specialist family violence service sector. We would like to hear your thoughts on what crisis services and support you found helpful, what other services you would like or need, and what barriers to reaching out for these services. Thus, your reflections on your experiences when you needed emergency support are very important for informing the future best practice emergency response.

### **What will I be Asked to Do?**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be part of an online (or in-person) discussion with up to five other victim-survivor participants or by yourself. The interview will take about 60-90 minutes. If you decide to do a one-on-one in-person interview, it can take place at a venue that is the most convenient and comfortable for you. The conversation will be recorded and then typed up. We will tell you when the recording starts and stops. You will be reminded that conversations between participants in the Zoom interviews must be respected, kept confidential, and not shared with anyone else. We will not ask for any information that may identify you, and the final report will not include any identifying quotes or information. We ask that you do not give any identifying information about yourself or others, either. You will be asked to consent by signing and returning the below consent form to the researchers or giving verbal consent at the interview.

### **Do I Have to Participate in This Study?**

No. Your participation is completely voluntary. It is your choice whether to attend the focus group or the individual interview, and you can refuse to participate. You can also skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, there will not be any negative consequences for you. Your withdrawal will not affect your past, current or future relationship with Safe Steps and with other family violence support services.

If you no longer want to be involved during the focus group or individual interview, we will not use any information you provided in the research. If you participate in a personal interview, you may withdraw your information if your data has not been analysed (usually, this is within 4 weeks of your interview). You may also withdraw your words from the project if you deem it necessary after your participation. For example, if you say something you regret at any part of the research, you can let the researchers know at once or up to 48 hours later, and those words will not be included in any analysis.

### **Will I be Paid for Participating in This Study?**

In recognition of your time and effort in participation and contribution to the research, you will receive a remuneration of \$150 (e-voucher/gift card) for being in the study.

### **What are the Potential Risks or Discomforts if I Participate?**

Focus groups are often seen as a space where participants benefit from a free and frank sharing of views, but there is a chance that what you say may become public. We will try to reduce the risk of this happening. It will include asking participants to de-identify people during their participation. The group facilitator will ask all focus group participants to not share what they hear in the group with anyone outside the group. Still, we cannot control what other participants may do. So it is possible that they could talk about what you say in group to others.

The group facilitator will ask everyone in the group to maintain a respectful tone. However, it is possible that disagreements may occur. In rare cases, the facilitator may stop the discussion and/or ask anyone acting disrespectfully to leave. The facilitator will also try to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, and so may call on you if you have not spoken for a while. Even though we wish to hear from everyone, you may always refuse to answer any question at any time. You may also stop participating at any time, with no consequences to you.

The researchers will provide pre-briefings before the interview. There will also be post-briefings the day after the consultation for an informal de-brief and offer of support to each participant. You may feel upset or uncomfortable during the focus group/interview. If that happens, the group facilitator will talk with you. We can also refer you to [[Safe Steps support workers](#)] or contact [[your support person](#)] at [[your preferred support service](#)], who may be able to help you, at no cost to you.

### **What are the Potential Benefits if I Participate?**

Being in this study may not help you directly. The information we learn from the focus group may help us understand better what barriers and enablers victim-survivors face when they are in emergency situations. It may also help us understand how services can improve their practices. We hope you will feel valued for the expertise and insights you bring to the study.

## **Confidentiality**

We will keep your records private to the extent permitted by law. Any information that is obtained in this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will only be disclosed if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) if specifically allowed by law, (3) you provide the researchers with written permission. For example, if you choose to discuss issues regarding the current abuse of a child, or if you tell us you are planning to cause serious harm to yourself or others, we will ask your support worker to discuss these issues with you further. If you do not have a support worker, we will make a report with you. This will be carried out in a confidential manner.

As mentioned above, when a person is part of a group, what they say may become public. We will seek group agreements with participants to agree to keep confidential any information they learn about other people in the course of participating in a focus group. We will try to reduce the risk of this happening as described above in the “potential risks” section.

All research data will be anonymous, which means that what you say in the interviews cannot be linked to you. The interview will be recorded, but we will not ask you to identify yourself. When the recording of the focus group is typed up, we will make sure that there is no identifying information about you or anyone else in the notes and/or transcript.

When the consultation and follow-up have concluded, correspondence (e.g. SMS or emails) between yourself and the researcher will be deleted. No third party will be involved with data analysis. Your individual information will not be identifiable in any publication. When we use quotes to ensure that the voices of participants come through, we will use pseudonyms in this way: Anna (Victim-survivor) and Anne-Marie (practitioners).

## **Storage of data**

All data collected will be stored on the secure electronic storage system at Safe Steps, which is login and password protected. All physical materials will be kept in locked cabinets on Safe Step premises. Only the researcher will have access to the data. The de-identified data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years after the final research publication, the standard period set by the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research. Afterwards, we will destroy all digital data and shred all paper copies.

## **Results and findings**

The research project is one of the 13 projects funded under the Family Violence Research Grants Program by Family Safety Victoria. Outcomes and findings from the research will be used to write a toolkit and final report to be submitted to Family Safety Victoria. We anticipate Family Safety Victoria may make the toolkit/final report available through their website. Findings from the research may also be published and/or presented in various forums/webinars. We may write articles that will be available on the internet.

You can also request a copy of the summary findings. If you want to be informed about the related publications, please let the researchers know after the interview or contact them via the phone number or email address listed above.

### **Further information and who to contact**

This research project has been approved by the Anglicare Human Research Ethics Committee [Ethics approval number 2022-03]. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, please get in touch with the researchers via the phone number or email address listed above.

### **Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the project, you are welcome to contact the Anglicare Victoria Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on:

Tel: 03 9412 6133

Email: [David.Giles@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:David.Giles@anglicarevic.org.au)

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and thoroughly investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

**Thank you for your time and interest in this project!**

## Consent Form

**TO: Victim-survivor Participants**

**Project Title:** Family Violence Crisis Continuum: Articulating and sharing best practice in a family violence emergency

**Project ID:** Ethics approval number 2022-03

**Chief Investigator:** Dr Yee Man Louie

I \_\_\_\_\_ (the participant) have been asked to take part in the Safe Steps research project specified above. I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, and I freely agree to participate. I understand that I can withdraw at any time during the project without affecting my relationship with Safe Steps [and add other organisations where applicable].

| I consent to the following:   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Audio and/or video recording during the focus group   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Audio and/or video recording during the interview   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking part in a focus group of up to 6 people  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking part in a one-on-one interview   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I give consent for my name to be used only in the acknowledgement section of the final report among others who have provided expert advice to the study | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I consent to the researchers contacting me again by email or phone to follow up, confirm or clarify information related to this interview               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The data I provide during this research may be used by Safe Steps in future research projects in a form that <b>does not</b> identify me in any way     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_