

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: 51678

Researcher: Emily Davey, Trainee Clinical Psychologist

Supervisors: Dr Belinda Graham and Professor Patrick Smith

You will be given a copy of this information sheet.

Project title: Clinicians' perspectives on memory work in early intervention for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project, which is being conducted as part of my Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the project?

Many people experience traumatic events during their lifetime, and while most recover naturally, some go on to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Receiving psychological support soon after a trauma – known as early intervention – may help to reduce the risk of longer-term difficulties.

Treatments for chronic PTSD are well established and often involve revisiting and processing trauma memories to reduce re-experiencing. However, there is much less clarity about whether this kind of memory-focused work is safe or helpful when used soon after trauma. Some studies suggest that addressing trauma memories early may aid recovery, while others have raised concerns about potential distress or negative effects.

As a result, there is currently no clear guidance on whether, when, or how memory-focused work should be used as part of early intervention for PTSD. In the absence of strong evidence, clinicians often rely on their own judgment and experience to decide what feels appropriate during the early post-trauma period.

This project aims to explore how clinicians who work with trauma survivors think about and use memory-focused approaches in early interventions. It will examine how mental health professionals conceptualise 'early' intervention, how they approach trauma memory work shortly after trauma exposure, and what factors influence their decisions about when and how to include this memory work in treatment. By exploring these perspectives, the study seeks to address a critical gap in understanding how clinicians approach early intervention for PTSD.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to take part because you are a mental health professional with experience supporting individuals shortly after exposure to trauma. Eligible participants are clinicians from any professional background (e.g., clinical psychology, counselling psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy, mental health nursing) who provide psychological support to people up to 1 year after trauma exposure.

We are aiming to interview approximately 12-15 clinicians working in relevant services such as major trauma centres, maternity and baby loss support, maxillofacial services, or other settings where early psychological support is offered following trauma.

What will happen if I take part?

If you are interested in taking part, you will first be asked to complete a **short online screening questionnaire** to confirm that you are eligible for the study. This questionnaire will ask for some brief demographic information and details about your professional background and clinical experience. It should take around **5 minutes** to complete.

If you are eligible, you may then be invited to take part in a **one-to-one semi-structured interview**. The interview will last approximately **60 minutes** and will take place online via Microsoft Teams.

During the interview, you will be asked about your experiences of working with people shortly after trauma, your understanding of early intervention for PTSD, and your views on memory-focused work during this period. There are no right or wrong answers – we are simply interested in your professional perspective. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to, and you will not be asked to discuss specific patients or identifiable clinical cases.

With your consent, the interview will be **video recorded** to ensure we accurately capture what you say. You are welcome to turn your camera off if you prefer not to be visible. The recordings will be used for analysis only and will be transcribed verbatim and anonymised during transcription, with all identifiable information removed.

With your consent, we may contact you again after the interview to invite you to review your transcript to ensure that it accurately captures what you said. You may also be invited to take part in member checking later in the project, where we will share a short written summary of the preliminary themes with you to check whether these interpretations reflect your views and experiences. We will also ask whether you are happy for us to retain your contact details for so that you can be contacted about future studies of a similar nature. These contact details will be destroyed by 30th October 2028 at the latest. Taking part in any of these steps is entirely optional.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read the information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part, we will ask you to sign a consent form and will give you a copy of this to keep.

You may withdraw from the study at any point, without having to give a reason.

Incentives

As a thank you for your time, you will receive a £25 voucher after completing the interview.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this study. However, we recognise that some of the topics discussed (e.g., trauma or therapeutic work with trauma survivors) may be sensitive.

If you experience any discomfort during the interview, you are welcome to pause, skip questions, or stop the interview at any time.

Data handling and confidentiality

King's College London is the Sponsor of this research and is responsible for looking after your information.

We will need to use information from you for this research project. The research team and authorised administrative staff will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly.

Your data will be processed in compliance with UK data protection laws, including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

We will collect some of your personal information, including your name, contact details, age, gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, and information about your clinical work. You will be given a unique participant ID number and we will use this to label all information we collect about you. The document linking your name and contact details to your unique ID will be stored separately from study data in a password-protected, restricted access file on the secure King's College London network. Only members of the research team and authorised administrative staff will have access to this information. No data will be shared outside of King's College London.

In line with [King's College London's schedule of retention periods for research data](#), identifiable data (such as consent forms and contact information) will be retained securely for up to 5 years after the project has ended, after which it will be reviewed and securely deleted. Anonymised data, including interview transcripts, will also be retained for a minimum of 5 years after project completion.

All quotes used in presentations, reports or publications will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified.

Further information on how King's processes research data can be found at:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

Please contact the research team if you require further information on data processing or a printed version of the webpage link above.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way.

You are able to withdraw your data from the project up until eight weeks after your interview. After this point, withdrawal will no longer be possible because the data will have been anonymised and included in the analysis. At that stage, removing individual data would require re-running or altering the analysis and report, which would compromise the integrity of the research.

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of this project will form part of the researcher's Doctorate in Clinical Psychology thesis at King's College London. Findings may also be published in academic journals, presented at conferences,

and disseminated through non-academic routes (e.g., clinical services, professional networks, organisational reports, websites, newsletters, or circulars) to help inform practice.

All outputs will include aggregated or anonymised data only, so no-one will be able to identify you or know that you took part in the study. The anonymised dataset will be stored securely but will not be made publicly available.

If you would like to receive a summary of the study findings once the project is complete, please let the research team know and we will be happy to send you a copy.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact the lead researcher:

Emily Davey

Trainee Clinical Psychologist

Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (IoPPN)

16 De Crespigny Park

London

SE5 8AB

emily.davey@kcl.ac.uk

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this project has harmed you in any way, or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr Belinda Graham

Henry Wellcome Building for Psychology

Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience (IoPPN)

15 De Crespigny Park

London

SE5 8AF

belinda.graham@kcl.ac.uk

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