



**MIND**  
**Medical Student Mental Health: A mixed methods and process  
mapping study**

**Online Survey**

**Participant Information Sheet**

**Invitation**

We are asking medical students to tell us about their mental health and wellbeing whilst studying at The Medical School, University of Sheffield. Whether you participate is entirely up to you. Before you decide we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. We have provided information below to help you decide whether you wish to take part. Please take time to read the information and ask if anything is unclear.

**What is this study about?**

Mental health problems are highly prevalent among UK medical students. Providing access to support services that deliver appropriate timely treatment is an urgent priority for universities and healthcare providers. However, medical students face particular sets of barriers to seeking and accessing support and many at-risk do not receive professional help. Challenges in service provision and navigating pathways between services mean that medical students can fall between the gaps. Understanding the barriers to help-seeking and accessing mental health support for medical students is essential for improving the quality of existing mental health services. In order to improve services and better meet medical students' needs in terms of service access and acceptability, we would like to invite you to take part in an online survey.

To explore the issues covered by the survey in more detail, we are also asking medical students to take part in an interview which will take around 30-60 minutes. If you

would be prepared to take part, please let us know on the last page of the survey and provide your contact details.

### **Why have I been invited?**

You have been invited to take part in an interview because you have been identified as a medical student studying at The Medical School, The University of Sheffield.

### **What will be involved if I take part?**

The research will take the form of a short and anonymous online survey which will ask you some questions about yourself, your mental health and wellbeing and your experiences of accessing or receiving support from mental health services. The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. Before you respond to the survey questions, there will be a consent form for you to fill in and sign. The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete.

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

No. It is up to you to decide whether you agree to take part and you can change your mind at any time, without giving a reason.

### **What will happen to the data and results from the interview?**

The anonymised survey results will be analysed, by two university researchers. Findings will be presented anonymously to other team members so that they can interpret the findings. If considered appropriate by the research team, the findings may be shared in written form in research publications or in presentations at conferences.

### **How will we use information about you?**

We will need to use information from you for this research project.

If you agree to be contacted about the interview stage of the study, then we will ask you to provide your name and contact details. People will use this information to contact you about the interview.

People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead.

We will keep all information about you safe and secure.

Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.
- We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.

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

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please contact Dan Hind at the research team ([d.hind@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:d.hind@sheffield.ac.uk); tel: +44 114 222 0707) or Professor Mark Strong, Dean of the School of Health and Related Research at the University of Sheffield ([m.strong@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:m.strong@sheffield.ac.uk)).

### **Will the information be confidential?**

Any feedback that we collect from the survey will be treated as confidential and stored securely. The anonymised data may be read by other researchers within the process evaluation team for analysis, but your name will not be included.

All participant information is stored on a password protected computer database. You will be allocated a study number and staff not directly involved with you will only know you by this number. No identifying data – such as your name and the location of the services you use - will be included in the survey data. Outputs from the research will not include identifying data and therefore they cannot be used to identify you.

We will be using the information you give us for this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Sheffield will archive the anonymous study data on the ORDA data store (<https://orda.shef.ac.uk/>).

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible.

You can find out more about how we use your information at  
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/research/information-governance>

University of Sheffield researchers will collect information from you for this research study in accordance with instructions from the University of Sheffield.

Individuals from the University of Sheffield and regulatory organisations may look at your research records to check the accuracy of the research study or the quality of the study's conduct. In such a case, the University of Sheffield, with your consent, will pass on these details along with the information collected from you. The only people in the University of Sheffield who will have access to information that identifies you will be members of the research team or those auditing the data collection process.

Information collected may identify you before direct identifiers, such as name or location, are removed. We will not combine information in a way that could identify you. The information will only be used for the purpose of health and care research, and cannot be used to contact you or to affect your care. It will not be used to make decisions about future services available to you, such as insurance.

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Our Data Protection Officer is Luke Thompson and you can contact him by phone (+44 114 222 1117) or email ([dataprotection@Sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@Sheffield.ac.uk)).

### **What are the potential benefits and disadvantages of taking part?**

We hope that you will find an opportunity to reflect on your experiences whilst studying at university. By taking part in the survey, your responses will help us to understand any challenges you may have faced or be experiencing in relation to your wellbeing, and inform recommendations for how mental health support can better meet the needs of medical students. Your contribution will be an important part of determining how we develop and improve mental health services across both university and NHS settings.

The purpose of this project is to use the feedback you provide to develop a toolkit that will guide universities and services to improve the mental health support provided to medical students.

We anticipate no major disadvantages to participation other than spending some of your time to complete the survey. We hope that thinking about your experiences will not be distressing but, if that happens, we suggest seeking help from any one or more of the following sources of support and advice:

- Your GP;
- The Samaritans (**tel:** 116 123; **email:** [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org))
- Sheffield Nightline - if you would like to talk to one of the Sheffield Nightline volunteers over the phone, phone lines are open from **8pm – 8am every day apart from Wednesday and Saturday during term time**. You can reach them through the number below (we are also on the back of your UCard if you forget!)

**tel:** 0114 222 8787; **email:** [listening@sheffield.nightline.ac.uk](mailto:listening@sheffield.nightline.ac.uk)

- NHS 111 for urgent medical advice
- If you'd like to receive further mental health support the Student Access to Mental Health Support (SAMHS) at the University of Sheffield is the first point of contact for you to explore a broad range of mental health support needs in a single triage appointment. Through a triage appointment, you can access a wider number of options that will be recommend to support your mental health. To book an appointment with SAMHS, go to: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/health-service/conditions/mental-health> (student login required).

### **Who is organising and funding this study?**

This research is funded by the British Medical Association (BMA).

### **Who has reviewed this project?**

The study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Sheffield School of Health and Related Research (SchARR) Research Ethics Committee.

### **If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact:**

**Study manager:** Elena Sheldon. Email: [e.m.sheldon@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:e.m.sheldon@sheffield.ac.uk)

If you wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from your involvement in this project, please contact the project's Designed Safeguarding Contact (Daniel Hind, [d.hind@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:d.hind@sheffield.ac.uk)). If the

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concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if you feel a report you have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, please contact the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin; l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).

*The University of Sheffield who are employing the researchers are liable for their employees' actions (undertaken as part of their job) and insure against the risk of claims relating to research studies that their staff design and undertake. This insurance covers both negligence and no-fault compensation.*

***This information sheet is for you to keep.***