

Letter of Information

ASSESSING CURRENT ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING THE PREVENTION, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN OLDER ADULTS: A NATIONAL SURVEY OF OLDER ADULTS

Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Jeanette Prorok & Dr. Salinda Horgan

You are invited to participate in a research survey to assess the current attitudes and practices regarding social isolation and loneliness in older adults.

You are being invited to participate in this survey because you are an older adult in Canada. We hope that the results of this survey will provide important information that can be used to support the development and promotion of national practice guidelines to combat social isolation and loneliness in older adults.

This project has been reviewed for ethical compliance by the Queen's University Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals Research Ethics Board.

DETAILS OF THE STUDY

You are invited to complete an online survey. At the end of this Letter of Information there will be a [NEXT] button. By clicking the [NEXT] button you will be providing your consent to participate in this study. When you click on the [NEXT] button you will be brought to a second webpage where you can complete the survey.

The survey should take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete. If there are any questions you are uncomfortable answering, you may skip the question. Please note, there are some mandatory demographic questions (e.g., age). Additionally, you will be asked the following optional demographic questions: province of residence, size of community (e.g. urban, rural), living situation (e.g. alone, with spouse), gender identity, education level, and sexual identity. Once you have completed the questions, you will hit the 'submit' button and your responses will be recorded in Qualtrics (survey management software).

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION. The benefits of this study are that survey findings can be used to support the development and promotion of national practice guidelines to combat the negative effects of social isolation and loneliness, and thereby improve overall health outcomes for older adults. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION. There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. Participation is voluntary, and you can decline to participate in any aspect of the research without any impact on your academic standing.

CONFIDENTIALITY. All of the responses you provide will be anonymized and kept confidential, including in publications (e.g. research manuscripts) based on this work. Your confidentiality will be protected to the extent permitted by applicable laws. The survey responses will be kept in encrypted files on Dr. Prorok's password protected computer located on Queen's campus.

In compliance with Queen's data storage policies, the survey data will be wiped from Dr. Prorok's computer after 5 years. Please note, the Queen's University Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals Research Ethics Board (HSREB) may require access to study-related records to monitor the ethical conduct of the research. HSREB is bound by confidentiality agreements concerning any personal information.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY. Your participation in the survey is voluntary. You may skip any questions you are not comfortable with. You may withdraw at any time without penalty. If at any point you wish to stop participating in the survey, you can exit the site. At that point you will no longer be considered a participant in this study and your data will be removed from study records and destroyed. Once you have completed the survey, we are not able to withdraw your data due to the anonymous nature of the survey.

COMPENSATION. There is no compensation provided for participating in the survey.

RESEARCH ETHICS. For ethics concerns please contact the **Queen's University Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals Research Ethics Board (HSREB) at 1-844-535-2988 (Toll free in North America) or hsreb@queensu.ca**. If you have any questions about the research, please contact: **Dr. Jeanette Prorok at 613-449-7133 or by email at prorokj@queensu.ca or Dr. Salinda Horgan at 613-532-7012 or by e-mail s.horgan@queensu.ca**.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT: This Letter of Information provides you with the details to help you make an informed choice. All your questions should be answered to your satisfaction before you decide whether or not to participate in this initiative. Please maintain a copy of this Letter of Information for your records.

By clicking on the [NEXT] button below you will be verifying that you have read the Letter of Information and all of your questions have been answered. You will not waive any legal rights by consenting to participate in this study.

Once you click on the [NEXT] button you will be brought to a page where you can complete the survey.