



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Plain Language Statement

Researcher Details

Title of the project: The Experience of Women Living with Vaginismus: A Qualitative Study

Name of University: University of Galway

Principal Investigator and Data Controller: Amy Cachia (a.cachia1@universityofgalway.ie)

OPENING STATEMENT:

Thank you for your interest in this study.

You are being invited to take part in a research study being carried out by Amy Cachia who is currently enrolled in the Masters of Science in Health Psychology at the University of Galway. The supervisors of this research study are Professor Molly Byrne and Dr. Jenny McSharry.

Before you decide whether you wish to take part or not, you should read the information provided below and, if you wish, discuss with (family, friends etc.). You can take as long as you like to decide if you want to take part until the 30th of April 2024. Any questions that you may wish to ask are always welcome. You should also be clear about the risks and benefits of taking part in this study so that you can make a decision that's right for you. This process is known as 'Informed Consent'.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DECIDE NOT TO PARTICIPATE?

You don't have to take part in this study. Choosing not to take part will not have any consequences.

You can also change your mind about taking part in the study even after commencement, up until 30th of April 2024 which is when the analysis of the study will start. In the case that you would like to withdraw before that date you would not need to give a reason, and be assured that if you do opt out, there will be no consequences. Also, any information that you would have provided within the interview will be deleted.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

This study aims to look further into the understudied topic of vaginismus. Specifically, on the experience of adult women living with vaginismus in the setting of the Republic of Ireland. Given that this topic is understudied this study has theoretical and practical implications for the area.

WHO IS ORGANISING AND FUNDING THIS STUDY?

This study is being carried out as part of the Masters of Science in Health Psychology at the University of Galway. There is no funding involved within the organising of this study.

WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO TAKE PART?

People over the age of 18 who identify as women, who are living with vaginismus and live in the Republic of Ireland are being asked to take part to get an understanding of what it means to be an adult woman living with vaginismus.

Unfortunately, you cannot take part if you are under the age of 18 years old and currently not living within the Republic of Ireland.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART?

Should you wish to take part, this study will require you to carry out an online interview with the researcher (Amy Cachia). This will be held on the online platform of Teams at a time mutually decided between you and the researcher and should take approximately an hour. Also, the researcher will ensure to carry out the interview in a private area. Should you provide informed consent to participate, this interview will be recorded with the aim of only being used for the purpose of this research study. However, after this interview is held nothing else is required of you, unless you should have any further questions that you would like to ask.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR ME TAKING PART?

There are no direct benefits when joining this study, however by joining in this research you will be providing vital insight into what it means to be living with vaginismus. This may guide further research in the area as well as professionals when it comes to discussing this topic with their patients. No incentives will be provided for joining this study.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

It may be that you find discussing living with vaginismus to be distressing. During the interview you can ask to take a break, or stop completely at any time. The researcher will send you a list of professionals you can contact after the interview should you feel like you would like more support.

Another risk in research is that of maintaining confidentiality, but the researcher of this study will ensure that your participation in this study will remain confidential. Neither your name nor any identifying details will be included in any reports on this study. However, while the material gathered will be treated in strict confidence, this is subject to legal limitations. This includes if the researcher becomes aware of the participant or someone else being in immediate danger or risk of harm. Also, if there is any mentioning of a past offense, they have knowledge of or have committed, or if there is a commission of a criminal offense. In this case, the researcher is obliged to report this to the relevant authorities. The participant will be informed that the researcher would need to report, but the researcher will not require their consent to do so.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW THE DATA WILL BE USED?

The data gained from the interview will be typed up to be analysed along with the other interviews by the researcher. You will be asked to pick a fake name, and you will only be mentioned by your pseudonym in the study and any identifiable details will be removed. This data will only be used in fulfilment of this dissertation and there is the possibility of the study being published in the future. No other parties or third countries will receive this data.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW MY DATA WILL BE PROTECTED?

As mentioned in previous sections, you will be given the option to decide on a pseudonym. This pseudonym will be used instead of your 'actual' name when labelling data and within the write-up of the study. Also, none of your identifiable details will be included in the typed-up account of the interview.

Aside from this, the data will be stored within the University of Galway OneDrive, as a secure online file that will be protected through a secure password of which only the researcher and the supervisors will have access to. In the case that any hardcopies are made these will be stored in a

locked cabinet which only the researcher will have access to. This data will then be kept for 7 years after data collection. After this deadline has passed the online data will be deleted and any hardcopies will be disposed of in a secure bin.

As a participant you should be aware that if you have any complaints regarding data protection you are free to contact the School of Psychology via email at psychology@universityofgalway.ie.

INCIDENTAL FINDINGS

In the case that any incidental findings regarding your health or wellbeing are found in the process of the study, you will be encouraged to contact the appropriate professionals. This could be the current professionals that you are seeing. At the end of the interview the researcher will send you a list of professionals specialised in the area for you to contact if you wish.

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

Should you be interested in getting more information, feel free to contact Amy Cachia at a.cachia1@universityofgalway.ie.

If you wish to contact a neutral third party, email the School of Psychology at psychology@universityofgalway.ie.

Thank you for your time and consideration!