

Study Name: Stakeholder priorities and preferences regarding diet and food products to improve health and reduce the risk of dementia in later life.

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Thank you for considering taking part in this research project. The purpose of this document is to explain to you what the work is about and what taking part would involve, so that you can make an informed choice.

The purpose of this study is to understand more about older adults' knowledge and views on a healthy diet and what makes people choose certain foods. We are interested in anyone aged 55 years or older (so already older, or middle aged, but starting to think about getting older). We are also interested in people's thoughts on food products that might promote health, and their overall place in a healthy diet. We will use your opinion to inform the potential future development of a food product to supplement a healthy diet.

What does the research involve? Should you choose to take part, you will be asked to take part in a focus group with other older adults, or with other members of your society or group. Each focus group will be led by a member of the research team from UCC. The online interviews/focus groups will take place over Microsoft Teams or Zoom, depending on what suits the group, and will be recorded with only the audio used for analysis. They will last 30-40 minutes. If you prefer, you can take part in a one-to-one interview with the researcher, especially if you don't like speaking in a group or have any communication problems.

Do you have to take part? No. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You don't have to take part at all, or you can choose to only answer some questions, or to stop the interview or leave the focus group at any time. Once the interview or focus group has been concluded, you can choose to withdraw your details at any time in the next two weeks.

Will your participation in the study remain confidential? Yes. All of the information you provide will be kept confidential by the researcher, who will make it available only to the research team. The only exception is where information is disclosed which indicates that

there is a serious risk to you or to others. Also, for the focus groups, while we can guarantee that we will maintain confidentiality, we cannot guarantee that focus group members will do the same, so it is important not to share overly personal information that you wouldn't want anyone else to know. We will remind you of this at the start of the focus group. We are very happy to be contacted by you after a focus group if you had something else to say that you want to say in private.

What will happen to the information you give? Once the focus group or interview is completed, the audio recording will be saved securely and then transcribed (typed out) by the researcher and all identifying information will be removed. After a 1:1 interview, you can choose to withdraw your details at any time in the next two weeks. This is not possible for a focus group as we may not be able to identify your personal contribution to the group discussion. The transcript will be stored on the University College Cork server for 10 years.

What will happen to the results? The information you give may contribute to research publications and/or conference presentations. Your input may also contribute to the future development of a healthy food product.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part? We do not expect any negative effects from taking part in this study. Should you experience any distress from this research, please contact the lead investigator, Prof. Suzanne Timmons at s.timmons@ucc.ie

Who has reviewed this study? This study has obtained ethical approval from the UCC Social Research Ethics Committee.

Any further queries? If you have any questions about this research, you can contact me, the researcher for the study, Lauren O Mahony at laurenomahony@ucc.ie or at 0879462460. I'd be happy to talk to you before you make up your mind whether to take part or not, or to discuss whether to take part by interview or focus group.

If you agree to take part in this study, please sign the consent form.

Consent Form

I.....agree to participate in The Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation’s research study called **“stakeholder priorities and preferences regarding diet and food products to improve health and reduce the risk of dementia in later life.”**

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for my focus group with The Centre for Gerontology and Rehabilitation to be audio-recorded.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within four weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity. I also undertake to maintain the confidentiality of the group.

I understand that disguised extracts from the focus group may be quoted in any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box:)

I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from the focus group

I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from the focus group

Signed:

Date:

PRINT NAME: