

## Information Sheet for Participants

### Project title: Waiting for Hospital Treatment

#### 1. Who are we?

We are Healthwatch Southwark, the independent champion for users of health and social care in the borough. We listen to people's experiences of using health and care services in order to drive improvements.

#### 2. Invitation

We would like to invite you to take part in our research project, Waiting for Hospital Treatment, because we think you have valuable knowledge and experience that could make a difference to the care provided in Southwark for future patients.

#### 3. Who can take part?

You can take part if you live in Southwark and have waited to receive treatment at hospital in the past two years **OR** you are currently waiting to receive treatment. In the first phase of our project, we would like you to take part if you have had/will have surgical treatment for arthritis, surgical treatment for an eye condition (such as cataracts), or hospital treatment for bowel, gynaecological or blood cancer.

#### 4. What is the purpose of the project?

Our project will explore your experiences of waiting for hospital treatment - not just the time you waited from referral to treatment, but what it was like from when you decided to go to the doctor. We want to understand the impact waiting had on your life, and how you managed your health and wellbeing in the meantime. We also want to know what services could do to improve the experience of waiting.

#### 5. What does taking part involve?

We would like you to take part in a focus group, with other people who have had a similar treatment, at a suitable location and time. We will be facilitating a group discussion on your experiences of getting a referral for treatment, waiting, and what could be done better. The focus group will last between 1.5-2 hours, and refreshments will be provided. We will also ask you to fill in an anonymous form about your demographic characteristics and sign a consent form before taking part.

#### 6. What are the possible risks of taking part?

We don't expect participation in this research to cause any harm or discomfort. However, we understand that we are asking you to share potentially sensitive or distressing experiences related to illness. You can decide not to answer questions and take a break from the group at any time.

## **7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There may be benefits to sharing your story in a supportive, confidential environment, among others who have experienced something similar. We also hope to use our findings to make a positive difference to other patients waiting for treatment in the future.

## **8. Will taking part be confidential?**

All the information we collect during the project will be kept strictly confidential and stored securely in our offices or in password-protected computer folders. You will not be identifiable in any reports we publish.

## **9. Will participants be recorded?**

During the focus groups we will take notes and an audio recording of what is said. We will seek informed consent from you before we do this.

## **10. What will happen to the information we collect during the project?**

We will use this information to write a report which will be published and shared with relevant people - we will also send you a copy directly if you wish. You will not be identifiable in the report. After we have published the report, any information we have collected about you will be destroyed.

## **11. Who is organising and funding this project?**

This project is being organised by Healthwatch Southwark staff: Alice Godmon (Research & Intelligence Officer), Bron Thomas (Engagement Officer) and Catherine Negus (Manager). We will be supported by our trained volunteers. Healthwatch Southwark operates as an independent statutory organisation and receives funding for its work from Southwark Council.

**If you would like more information about this project, please contact:**

**[info@healthwatchsouthwark.org](mailto:info@healthwatchsouthwark.org)**

**0207 358 7005**