



# A new Healthy Ageing In Scotland (HAGIS) Study: COVID-19 Impact and Recovery Survey *Experiences and lessons learnt working with co-researchers*

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# Presentation overview



- Introduction to the COVID-19 Impact and Recovery study
- Co-production activities
  - recruitment
  - practical examples of methods of engagement
  - learning



# Project aims

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- To explore how the pandemic has impacted the way those aged 50+ live their lives in Scotland
- To make a significant contribution to policy debate and public health messaging in Scotland

Funding: £712,000 from the Economic and Social Research Council as part of UK Research and Innovation's rapid response to Covid-19.



# Survey and survey themes

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Worries Emerging  
from the COVID-19  
Pandemic (WECP)  
Scale

COVID-19 and You:  
Impact and Recovery  
Study

- Technology & social connectedness
- Health behaviour and health service engagement
- Economic activity (including returning to work and travel)



## **VOLUNTEER CO-RESEARCHERS WANTED**

**Are you aged 50 years or over?**

**Are you interested in helping us to understand how COVID-19  
has impacted on our everyday lives?**

**Would you like to be part of something which will help to  
shape how we readjust our lives following COVID-19?**



# The co-production team

Seven people over 50 living across Scotland

Providing lived experience – variety of experiences during the pandemic and range of backgrounds and locations

Meet online using MS Teams and use email and phone to stay in touch, some face-to-face

Recruitment of the team prioritised at the start of the project



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Image: <https://nicoletadraghici.com/working-together/>



# Examples of co-production

- 'Think aloud' exercise to help develop COVID-fear scale
- Discussion on relevance of questions on finances and employment
- Review of health questions for survey
- Suggestions of multiple choice answers for questions about technology use
- Input on scripting of invitation text, design of envelope/email to distribute survey, name of the survey!



# Co-researcher suggestions for finance questions

- important to capture the impact of the pandemic on carers
- confusing to link 'life expectancy' with finance and felt it was best placed in the health section
- questioned the need to use the term 'life expectancy' as they felt it is insensitive
- reflected that they are all retired and so not best placed to comment on employment questions
- spoke about anxiety related to new banking methods and changes relating to how they manage and access money – fear of online scams and losing passwords





# What would entice you to open the email/envelope?

Message on front of envelope, such as:

*'Would you like to be part of an important piece of research?'*

Addressed personally not to the household

Mention it is about the pandemic, so important and you can help

State it is a Stirling university study and help is needed, franked from University

Could the name and address on the envelope be hand written?

Needs to stand out, avoid political colours, something colourful, violet?

Link to information on the University website so you can see it is not a scam. Provide direct link as well. But go to Stirling website to check we are genuine

Perhaps send intro email before sending survey link which refers back to intro email (scammers wouldn't know this) - would like to know in advance that were going to receive a survey

Genuine University email address

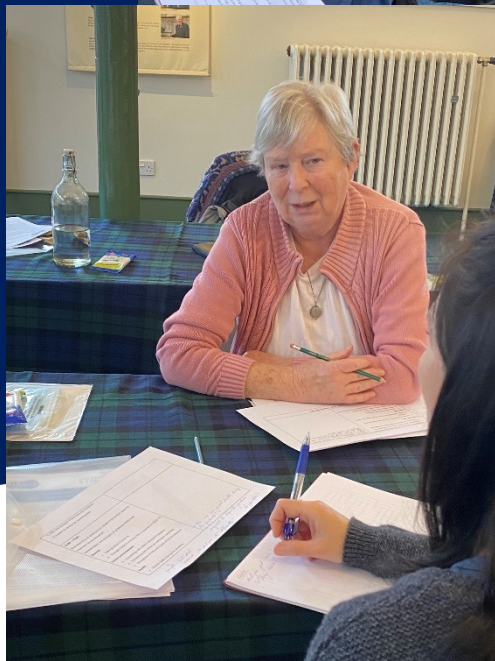
If the e-mail/ letter could be individualised with the recipient's name at the top....even better.



# How would you explain what the survey is about to someone who has been asked to complete it?



*“With restrictions gradually easing in respect of our living with COVID 19, we are all keen for a bit of normality to return. However, we also recognise that in many ways life will never be quite the same again. So here is your opportunity to help shape the 'new normal' over the coming months and years. We invite you to share your personal experiences during COVID and tell us what the 'new normal' should look like.”*



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# Learning

Co-researchers have been particularly valuable in identifying key areas of concern, shaping survey questions, and writing recruitment scripts.

Co-researchers report personal benefits with the online group providing support and shared experiences throughout the pandemic.

The value of co-production with people that reflect a cohort of interest should not be underestimated and should be built-in to new longitudinal studies.



# Co-researcher page on new HAGIS website



[ABOUT US](#) [PARTICIPANTS](#) [RESEARCH](#) [More](#)

## Co-Researchers

### Who we are

We are a small group of volunteer co-researchers from different parts of Scotland. All of us are over the age of 50, the same as the participants of our HAGIS: COVID-19 Impact and Recovery Study. We have been meeting virtually for several months now to help to shape the questionnaire and develop the skills to assist with interviewing study participants. We bring with us a broad variety of skills and experiences and have gelled very well as a group despite not being able to meet face-to-face for a while!



<https://www.hagis.scot/>

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# Thank-you for listening

For more information please contact Louise McCabe  
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