

## TOPIC GUIDE: Participants

**Notes:** This topic guide is a flexible tool and may be revised as new areas of interest arise during the process of data collection. The wording of questions is for guidance only and can be varied to suit the natural style of the interviewer and the level of understanding of the participant.

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### Welcome and context-setting

- Introduce yourself
- Remind the participant (and their carer if present), “I work for the University research team, not for the NHS. The content of the interview will not be shared with their health care providers. Nothing you say will affect the care you receive”.
- Inform them, “I want to find out what you thought about the STEPWISE programme, so that we can make it better. And I also want to find out how you felt being in the research study so that we can improve research studies in the future.”
- “The interview will last approximately an hour”
- Explain that, “to help us with this study, we would like to make a recording of what we all say today, but nobody will be able to identify you from that recording other than me. Is that okay?”.
- ...There are no right or wrong answers
- You are free to withdraw at any point and you don’t have to answer any of the questions if you don’t want to.
- Check they are happy to continue and ask if there are any questions.

### Questions

1. How did you find the STEPWISE programme?
    - Was there anything in particular that you liked about it?
    - Was there anything in particular that you didn’t like about it?
    - How long were the sessions? Was that okay?
    - How many sessions did you attend? [Probe: if sessions were missed, why?]
    - What did you think of the people who led your group
    - Did you feel you got any benefit from the programme? Were there any downsides?
    - Did you feel it got the balance right in terms of talking about both diet and physical activity?
    - Did you bring somebody with you to the sessions – like a family member? [If no] Do you think that would have been helpful?
    - Did the programme meet your needs?
    - Did you attend the Booster sessions (if scheduled);
      - Was it useful?
    - Did you have any of the one-to-one sessions with your facilitator?
      - [If yes] How often they happen? Was it over the phone? Face-to-face? Some other way?  
Did you find it useful?
- [If no] Would you like to have done so?

2. Was it easy to fit STEPWISE sessions into your usual routine?
3. How did you get to the STEPWISE sessions?
  - Was it easy to get to the sessions?
  - How long did it take?
  - [If using a car] What kind of distance did you have to drive, there and back again for each session?
  - [If travelling by public transport] Do you mind telling us what you spent getting there and back again for each session?
4. How do you feel now it's the end of the weekly course?
5. Would you have preferred it if the STEPWISE sessions had been closer together – for example, every day for four days – rather than spread out over several weeks?
6. How did you hear about this study?
  - How did you feel about being approached to participate in the study?
  - How did you feel about a computer deciding whether you were going to go to the STEPWISE sessions or not?
7. We asked you to fill in some questionnaires with the STEPWISE logo on the top, at the beginning of the study and again recently.
  - What did you think about the number of questions you were asked?
  - Did you have any trouble answering any of the questions?
  - We use those questions to find out whether how you are feeling. Did you feel any of the questions were more important than others?
8. What else should I have asked you?

**Thank you for your time**