



## Participant Information Sheet

### Project title: Understanding patient experiences of out-of-hours GP services

**Introduction:** This study is part of a programme of research funded by the National Institute of Health Research (Department of Health) that is examining various ways of improving patient experience in primary care. In the first stage of this research we have surveyed, and conducted interviews with, patients who had recently accessed out-of-hours primary care providers. In the second stage, which is commencing now, we will be interviewing staff from out-of-hours primary care services to gather their views on the results of the General Practice Patient Survey (GPPS).

Before you decide whether you would like to take part, please take the time to read the following information. If there is anything that is unclear, or if you would like more information, please contact the research team. All communication will be treated confidentially.

**What is the purpose of this study?** The NHS is increasingly interested in patients' views of their health care; the introduction of the national GPPS is part of this development. A short part of the survey asked patients about out-of-hours care. In the first stage of the study we have used these questions in a patient survey, combined with the more detailed Out-of-hours Patient Questionnaire (OPQ). Now we are looking to understand the providers' views on how to better use the survey results and how to improve out-of-hours primary care service and would like to interview a small number of the service representatives.

**Why have I been chosen?** Your service agreed to take part in this study. Organisations were chosen on the basis of previous GPPS scores and to ensure diversity of settings. We asked organisations to nominate up to three staff members whose role routinely involves gathering and/or acting upon patient feedback, and who we might approach to be interviewed for this study.

**Do I have to take part?** It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide not to take part we will respect your decision, and of course, it will not affect your service or your position in any way. If you do decide to take part, please, return the reply slip in the pre-paid envelope or phone us using the numbers below. You are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**What would happen if you agree to take part?** Our researcher will contact you to answer any questions you might have and to arrange for an interview at a location of your choice, and which will last 40-60 minute. At the interview you will be asked to comment on the use of patient surveys for out-of-hours care, both national surveys (GPPS) and in-house questionnaires. The researcher will also be interested to hear your views towards the patient feedback mechanisms your service has in place and on how services can act on patient feedback to improve the care that you provide. With your permission we will record the interview, which will then be transcribed and analysed by the researchers.

**Who would have access to the information?** All information collected during the course of this study will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be anonymised and analysed by the research team. All data will be stored securely by the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry. The digital audio recording of the

interview will be destroyed once anonymised transcripts of the interview have been made and checked for accuracy. At the end of the study the confidential records and files will be kept for 7 years and then destroyed. The confidential handling, storage and disposal of data are compliant with the Data Protection Act of 1998.

**What will happen to the study results?** The findings from this study will be published to provide policy makers and service providers with guidance on how best to use the patient survey feedback information to shape practice. No individual will be identified personally in any report or publication.

**What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?** We will be asking you to talk frankly about how patient surveys are conducted within your organisation, and what steps (if any) are taken to use this feedback to improve services. While we do not foresee any risks in taking part, you should be aware that we will be feeding back (anonymised) results to participating services. Please be reassured that when feeding back to services that any data that you provide will be grouped with responses from other respondents, and that the anonymity of staff interviewees will be prioritised. Your service will not know you took part unless you choose to let them know that you did.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?** Taking part will provide services with the information necessary for identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Who is organising and funding the study?** The study is organised by the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry. The study is funded by the Department of Health.

**Who has reviewed the study?** This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the <name> NHS Research Ethics Service <insert>.

**What if there is a problem?** If you have any reason to complain about any aspect of the study or the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact the academic lead for this project (Dr Suzanne Richards), or <service lead> from your service.

**What will happen next?** Once the research team has received your completed response sheet, a researcher will contact you by telephone or email to discuss your participation further. In the meantime if you would like any further information please use the contact details below.

**Further information:** If you would like more information please contact the research team:

<Lead researcher name>

<researcher address>

Email: <researcher email>

Telephone: <research telephone number>

*Thank you for considering taking part in this study*