

## Participant interviews

[13 December 2011 Version 1.0] PHR 09-3004-01

Participant ID	
Date of Interview	
Researcher ID	

## PLINY: Putting Life in Years: Telephone friendship groups qualitative sub-study

### Participant semi-structured interview topic guide

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The participant interviews will examine:

- the acceptability of the process of delivering telephone friendship groups
- the extent to which older people value telephone friendship groups as making an impact on their wellbeing
- the extent to which the facilitator enabled them to make choices and decisions during the telephone friendship groups
- older people's needs and the nature of the telephone friendship groups they receive
- whether older people continue to be part of a friendship group, have kept in touch with contacts or initiated their own group.

### Themes and potential questions

N.B. In accordance with the design of the qualitative sub-study, the content of the topic guide may be revised in light of on-going analysis and emerging issues.

### Telephone friendship groups –

Explore the **process** of the telephone friendship groups with older people in terms of:

- Acceptability – *how did you find the telephone friendship groups?*
- Attrition - *Did you complete the 12 weeks? If not, explore reasons why. (Prompts: facilitator, organisation of groups, group members).*
- Accessibility – *how easy was it for you to take part in the weekly telephone group sessions?*
- Group sessions – *can you talk me through the process of being involved in the group with other people? (Prompts: similar interests, length of sessions – opportunity to speak, numbers in the group, did the group have a goal or purpose). LINK TO*
- Role of the volunteer facilitator – *can you talk me through the role the volunteer facilitator played in the group? (Prompts: organisation, clear aims, instructions)*
- Barriers – *can you talk about any issues which made taking part in the group sessions, or receiving calls, difficult?*
- Receipt – *can you talk me through the things you learnt during the group sessions?*

Explore the **value** of the telephone friendship groups for older people in terms of:

- General health and wellbeing – *how important is it for you? What type of support did you receive from the telephone friendship groups? If the telephone friendship groups did not exist would it make a difference to your life?*
- Relationship with the volunteer facilitator – *can you talk me through the relationship that you had/have with your volunteer facilitator?*
- Main benefits of the telephone friendship groups – *what are the positive aspects? Are there any negative aspects? (Prompt: people they liked or didn't like, any disagreements – how these were dealt with/if any.)*

- Impact [enactment] – *can you tell me about any changes in your life as a result of the telephone friendship groups? (Prompts: initiate calls, new friends/staying in touch, new interest/activity, starting own group, levels of confidence with/ making new contacts).*
- Cost – *if telephone friendship groups were available but there was a cost to you (of approximately £2 - £5 per week) would you be willing to pay for this service? (Prompt: explore ability to pay, balance between cost and length of calls e.g. 30 minutes would cost less than 1 hour).*

Explore the **needs** of older people in relation to the telephone friendship groups in terms of:

- Expectations – *what did you expect the telephone friendship group to be like? Were they as you expected them to be?*
- Type of need – *what did you want from the telephone friendship group? Have these 'wants' been met?*
- Improvements to the telephone friendship group – *how can your experience of the telephone friendship groups be improved?*

**Health** – physical and emotional health. Explore past (pre-telephone friendship group) and present health. *Has the telephone friendship group made a difference? If so, how?*

**Activities** – **house related tasks**, e.g. cleaning, preparing meals, etc.; **personal care**, e.g. washing, dressing, etc.; **mobility**, e.g. bending, kneeling, lifting, etc.; **outside tasks**, e.g. shopping, walking any distance, etc. Explore whether changes have occurred and if so, how have older people's ability to perform activities changed in the last few months (i.e. since before older people joined the telephone friendship groups and whilst older people have been in receipt of the telephone friendship). Explore ability to perform these activities in relation to older people's physical and emotional health (pre- telephone friendship group and during telephone friendship group). *Has the telephone friendship group in any way affected your ability/inclination to perform these activities?*

**Social interaction** – occasions when older people socialise either with family, friends, neighbours or groups. Explore whether changes have occurred since receiving the telephone friendship intervention and if so, in what way has social interaction changed. Explore social interaction in relation to older people's physical and emotional health (pre-telephone friendship group and during telephone friendship group). *Has the telephone friendship group in any way affected your ability/inclination to socialise?*

**General well-being** – feelings and mood. Explore past (pre-befriending) and present general well-being. *How does/did it make you feel, being part of the telephone friendship group?*

Explore any **other issues** that older people have in relation to the telephone friendship groups – *is there anything else you would like to say about your experience of the telephone friendship groups?*

Finally, explore the acceptability of the questionnaires administered at baseline (face-to-face) and at follow-up (6 months).

## Volunteer facilitator interviews

[Facilitator interview topic guide 5 January 2012 Version 1.0]

Facilitator ID	
Date of Interview	
Researcher ID	

## PLINY: Putting Life in Years: Telephone friendship groups qualitative sub-study

### Volunteer facilitator semi-structured interview topic guide

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The [service provider] volunteer facilitator interviews will examine:

- the extent to which the volunteer felt able to develop the skills of participants in the telephone group (training, tools used, example observations)
- barriers to uptake (including the transition from one-to-one to group discussions)
- the challenges faced during the delivery of the intervention (issues raised by participants, technical difficulties, group dynamics)
- the challenges of implementation of telephone friendship groups
- whether older people continued to be part of a friendship group and how the group negotiated keeping in touch with contacts or starting their own group
- the extent to which they felt supported whilst delivering the intervention (monitoring).

### Themes and potential questions

N.B. In accordance with the design of the qualitative sub-study, the content of the topic guide may be revised in light of on-going analysis and emerging issues.

### Facilitating telephone friendship groups –

Explore the **process** of the volunteer running the telephone friendship groups with older people in terms of:

- Motivation – *can you tell me why you chose to volunteer for this role? (Prompts: what did you expect? How did this compare to the experience of running the groups?).*
- Acceptability – *can you talk me through your role running the telephone friendship groups? (Prompts: organisation, any difficulties clear aims, instructions, if applicable, did they stop running groups – if yes, explore the reasons for this?)*
- Drop out - *Did anyone miss a group discussion? If yes, explore reasons why. (Prompts: drop out, choice of topic, other group members, technical issues, organisation of meetings e.g. convenient time).*
- Accessibility – *how easy was it to organise weekly telephone discussions?*
- Group sessions – *can you talk me through the process of running a group? (Prompts: how were topics chosen, length of session, level of involvement, numbers in the group, did the group have a goal or purpose, did all members join the group at the same time – if no, how did this work?).*
- Barriers – *can you talk about any issues which made running the group discussions, or making calls to members, difficult? (Prompt: any issues which made it easier to run the groups?)*

- Perceived (participant) understanding - *can you talk me through any ideas/skills you introduced to the group? (Prompt: How did the group respond? Did you feel they understood e.g. self- confidence and wellbeing and what can improve them?)*

Explore the facilitator (study-specific) **training** delivered to volunteers in terms of:

- Relationship with the trainer – *can you talk me through the training session/s? (Prompts: opportunity to ask questions, clear guidance, manuals/instructions, opportunity to make suggestions for the programme content?)*
- Facilitation skills – *can you talk me through the skills or techniques you learned as part of the facilitator training? (Prompt: listening, ground rules, group relationships/dynamics)*
- Experience – *how prepared did you feel by the training? (Prompts: were examples useful, did issues come up during the telephone group discussion which was not covered in the training? If yes, what were these issues?)*

Explore the **general issues** arising from facilitating groups in terms of:

- Relationship with the group members – *can you talk me through the relationship that you had/have with members in your group/s? (Prompt: transition from one-to-one to group sessions – were they the same individuals? If yes, explore whether this was beneficial.)*
- Main benefits of the telephone friendship groups – *can you identify ways you think the participant benefited from the discussions? What are these positive aspects? Are there any negative aspects? (Prompt: members who did not get on, any disagreements – how did you deal with this issue/if any?)*
- Impact – *can you tell me about whether you feel any members of the group changed during the course of the 12 weeks? (Prompts: initiate calls outside the group, new interest/activity, levels of confidence with/ making new contacts, new friends/staying in touch, started own group).*
- [Service provider] training – *can you tell me about the training you received from [service provider]? (Prompts: topics covered, opportunity to ask questions about the various volunteer roles and what they would involve).*
- Volunteer wellbeing – *Did you receive any support whilst running the telephone friendship groups? (Prompts: If yes, who provided support? Did any issues come up which you felt you needed support with? If yes, what kind of support did you need? Did you know who to ask if you were concerned about a member of the group?).*
- Improvements to the telephone friendship group – *From your experience of running the telephone friendship group/s, is there anything which could have been done differently or improved? (Prompt: organisation, technical issues, training or participant issues).*

Explore any other issues that the volunteer has/had in relation to the telephone friendship groups – *is there anything else you would like to say about your experience of running the telephone friendship groups?*