**Participant Information Sheet**

**Title of Research: Living Independently & Free from Targeted Abuse (LIFT): Understanding the Experiences of Disabled People**

**Background to the Study**

This research is being conducted by Charles O’Mahony and Fiona McNulty at the University of Galway. The research aims to explore the experiences of disabled people who have been targeted for exploitation or abuse (sometimes referred to as ‘mate crime’) and to assess policing, legal responses, and community safety measures in Ireland. The research will also gather insights from key stakeholders, including disability service providers, Disabled Persons Organisations, community policing representatives, and policymakers.

The research is funded by the Policing and Community Safety Authority and funded by Research Ireland.

**Invitation to Participate**

You are invited to take part in this study because your experiences and insights are highly valuable in understanding how abuse affects disabled people and how systems respond to it. Before you decide, it is important to understand the purpose of the study and what participation involves.

**Purpose of the Study**

This research seeks to address key questions, including:

1. What are the experiences of disabled people who have faced targeted abuse or exploitation?
2. How effective are policing, legal, and community responses to this form of abuse?
3. What changes are needed to ensure better protection and justice for disabled people?

**Do You Have to Participate?**

No, participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part, this information sheet explains what is involved.

**Right to Withdraw & Withdrawal Process**

You may withdraw from the study at any time.

**What Will Happen if You Agree to Take Part?**

You will complete this survey online or the easy read version.

**Benefits of Participation**

By taking part in this research, you will have the opportunity to share your experiences and contribute to a better understanding of how to improve legal and policing responses for disabled people.

*Your insights will help shape recommendations for policymakers, police services, and disability advocacy groups.*

**Potential Risks & Support Available**

Some topics may be sensitive or distressing to discuss. If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you may pause, stop, or withdraw from the survey.

**Confidentiality**

All information you provide will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely on an encrypted University of Galway system, accessible only to the research team. You will not be identified in the research or the report for this project.

**Easy Read Survey**

We have developed an easy read version of the survey. This can be filled out and emailed or posted to Dr Charles O’Mahony (see contact information below). If you would like support to complete the survey or require any accommodations, or support please contact the research team Charles and Fiona (see contact details below).

**Ethical Approval & Oversight**

This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Galway Research Ethics Committee.

**What This Research Can and Cannot Do**

Your participation will help increase awareness of targeted abuse against disabled people and improve understanding of how to respond to it. However, this study cannot directly change laws or policies, though findings will be shared with decision-makers and Disabled Peoples Organisations to inform future reforms.

**Feedback & Access to Study Findings**

A summary of the research findings will be shared with participants once the study is complete. If you would like to receive updates about this project, please email Dr Charles O’Mahony.

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| **Dr Charles O’Mahony**  Associate Professor in Law  School of Law, University of Galway, Galway, H91 TK33  📧 [charles.omahony@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:charles.omahony@universityofgalway.ie)  📞 +353 (0)91 494391  **Fiona McNulty**  Researcher  School of Law, University of Galway, Galway, H91 TK33  📧 [fiona.mcnulty@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:fiona.mcnulty@universityofgalway.ie) |

**Thank you for considering participation in this research.**

**Signed**

Charles O’Mahony & Fiona McNulty

**Participant Information Sheet (Accessible Version)**

**Participant Information Sheet**

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| **Title of Research** | Living Independently & Free from Targeted Abuse (LIFT): Understanding the Experiences of Disabled People |
| **Who is Doing This Research?**  Research Ireland (@researchireland) • Threads, Say more  PCSA Online Consultation | This research is being carried out by **Dr Charles O’Mahony and** Fiona McNulty at the **University of Galway**. The research is supported by the **Policing and Community Safety Authority** and funded by **Research Ireland**.  **Research Ireland** funds research projects that aim to improve knowledge and understanding in different areas law, science and medicine.  **The Policing and Community Safety Authority** is an independent organisation that oversees policing in Ireland. |
| **Why is This Research Being Done?**  Thumbnail Image fun image of question marks | We want to learn about the **experiences of disabled people** who have faced **targeted abuse or exploitation** (sometimes called **mate crime**).  We also want to understand how **police, disability services, and communities respond** to these issues and what can be done to improve **safety and justice for disabled people**. |
| **Who Can Take Part?**  A group of doors with different colors  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | We are inviting **disabled people, self-advocates, and people working in disability support services, advocacy, or policing** to share their experiences and knowledge. |
| **Do I Have to Take Part?**  A person standing on a crossroad with a question mark and a question mark  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | ❌ **No.**  Taking part is your choice. You can say no now or change your mind later. |
| **Can I Leave the Study Later?**  **A person with her hand on her chin  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | ✅ **Yes.** You can leave the survey at any time without submitting. |
| **What Will Happen If I Take Part?**  A group of people sitting in chairs  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | Through completion of the survey. |
| **Will I Get Paid?**  **A sign with a red cross  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | **No.** There is no payment for taking part in this study. |
| **What Are the Benefits of Taking Part?**  A group of people around a table  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | Your feedback may help **influence policy discussions** and improve understanding of targeted abuse against disabled people. |
| **Could This Be Difficult for Me?**  **A logo of a balance scale  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | Talking about your experiences may be emotional.  If you feel uncomfortable, you can pause, stop, or leave at any time. |
| **Will My Information Be Kept Private?**  Thumbnail Image symbols representing privacy | **Yes.** Everything you share will be kept confidential.  Your name will not be used. |
| **\\files\home$\GalwayAdvocacy\Downloads\Easy Read Logo 1.png** | **Easy Read Survey**  We have developed an easy read version of the survey. This can be filled out and emailed or posted to Dr Charles O’Mahony (see contact information below).  If you would like support to complete the survey or require any accommodations, or support please contact the research team Charles and Fiona (see contact details below). |
| **Will My Words Be Used in the Research?**  **A person in a suit and tie  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | Yes, but anonymously. We may use some quotes from the survey. But no one will be identified. |
| **What Will Happen With the Research?**  **A stack of files with binders  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | **This research will help raise awareness** of targeted abuse against disabled people.  It may be used to suggest **policy changes**, but we **cannot promise** that it will lead to direct improvements. |
| **Who Approved This Research?**  University of Galway - Wikipedia | This research has been approved by the University of Galway Research Ethics Committee (TBC). |
| **Who Can I Contact for More Information?**  **A person standing at a podium with a computer  AI-generated content may be incorrect.** | **Dr Charles O’Mahony**  Associate Professor in Law  School of Law, University of Galway, Galway, H91 TK33  📧 [charles.omahony@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:charles.omahony@universityofgalway.ie)  📞 +353 (0)91 494391  **Fiona McNulty**  Researcher  School of Law, University of Galway, Galway, H91 TK33  📧 [fiona.mcnulty@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:fiona.mcnulty@universityofgalway.ie) |