

## PROFESSIONALS' EXPERIENCES OF THE COURT OF PROTECTION: INFORMATION ABOUT FOCUS GROUPS AND SURVEYS

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

*Welfare Cases in the Court of Protection* is a research project at Cardiff Law School, funded by the Nuffield Foundation<sup>1</sup>. The project is led by Professor Phil Fennell. Dr Lucy Series is the researcher working on the project, and Professor Luke Clements and Dr Julie Doughty are project consultants. The project examines three core issues in welfare cases in the Court of Protection: accessibility, efficiency and transparency. More information about the project as a whole can be found on the project website:

<http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/wccop/>

### ABOUT THE FOCUS GROUPS

We are holding focus groups with key stakeholders with experience of welfare cases in the Court of Protection, including: local authority staff with experience of Court of Protection litigation (including both legal and social care staff); NHS staff (including both legal and social care staff); IMCAs; solicitors; barristers; litigation friends and judges.<sup>2</sup> Ideally focus groups would consist of around 4 – 8 people with personal experience of being involved in a case which went to the Court of Protection. Focus groups will be semi-structured and will discuss 9 open-ended questions around their experiences and views on the three core themes of our research: accessibility, efficiency and transparency in welfare proceedings. These questions will be sent to participants prior to the focus group.

We can either host focus groups at Cardiff University or in London, or we can come to a location chosen by the participants. They will take approximately 2.5 hours, with a short break halfway through.

### ABOUT THE SURVEYS

Some participants are unable to take part in a focus group, or would prefer to give individual feedback. In these circumstances, we can share a copy of the questions that would be asked in the focus group as a survey, for participants to fill out individually and send back to us. The survey will be sent to participants by email.

### HOW WILL THE DATA BE USED?

The focus groups will be recorded using a digital recorder, and the recording would then be transcribed by a professional transcription agency. Transcripts and survey responses will be analysed by the researchers using research software called NVivo<sup>3</sup>, to explore different experiences and perspectives.

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<sup>1</sup> The Nuffield Foundation is an endowed charitable trust that aims to improve social well-being in the widest sense. It funds research and innovation in education and social policy and also works to build capacity in education, science and social science research. More information is available on the [Nuffield Foundation website](#).

<sup>2</sup> We also plan to speak to other litigants, including families and people who are the subject of Court of Protection proceedings, but we do not plan to do this through focus groups.

<sup>3</sup> NVivo is software which is used to analyse qualitative research. It allows researchers to compare themes between multiple different data sources.

This analysis will then contribute towards publications from the research project, including: academic presentations and publications in academic and professional journals; presentations at professional and academic events; reports and blog posts on our project website; materials produced to assist those involved in welfare litigation in the Court of Protection.

Any written publications will be made available on our project website<sup>4</sup> and will also be available upon request. Publications and presentations of this data may use direct quotations, but would not identify any individuals, and organizations would only be identified with their explicit consent (see below). There is space on the consent form to include your email address, so that we can send you a copy of the report when it is completed.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT

Cardiff University Research Ethics Committee has granted approval for this study. We will not use the names of any of the individuals taking part in the focus groups in any discussion or publication of our findings. We will only identify an organization where they have given their explicit written consent for us to do this.<sup>5</sup> Any publications or presentations using this data would take care to minimize risks of 'jigsaw identification'. Any personal data will be stored in accordance with the Data Protect Act 1998.

We will seek the written consent of all participants at the outset of the focus group for use of their data in accordance with this information sheet. Those taking part in the survey will be asked to 'sign' the consent form by writing their name in the space on the Word document, or inserting their electronic signature, and emailing this back to us.

## NHS R&D APPROVAL

If you work for the NHS, we may need additional approval from your local R&D office to take part in the study. Please get in touch with us so that we can arrange this.

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to take part in the study, please contact Lucy Series by email, at [SeriesL@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:SeriesL@cardiff.ac.uk).

If you have any questions for us you can phone us on 02920 874344. You can also email contact Professor Fennell about the project at [Fennell@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:Fennell@cardiff.ac.uk). Or you can write to us at: Cardiff Law School, Cardiff University, Museum Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3AX.

This project has received ethical approval from the Cardiff School of Law and Politics Research Ethics Committee (SREC) (Internal Reference: SREC/040215/05). The Cardiff School of Law and Politics Research Ethics Committee (SREC) can be contacted at:

School Research Officer  
Cardiff School of Law and Politics  
Cardiff University, Law Building, Museum Avenue, Cardiff CF10 3AX  
Email: [LAWPL-Research@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:LAWPL-Research@cardiff.ac.uk)

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<sup>4</sup> <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/wccop/>

<sup>5</sup> The identities of some organisations would be impossible to conceal, specifically the Office of the Official Solicitor and the judiciary of the Court of Protection. We would not, however, identify any individuals from those organisations.