



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

Investigating interventions to improve bone health and muscle strength in perimenopause

Information Sheet for Potential Participants – Focus Groups

My name is Becca Freeden and I am a postgraduate student from the School of Health at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. As part of my PhD course, I am undertaking a research project for my thesis. The title of my project is: **Investigating interventions to improve bone health and muscle strength in perimenopause from a bio-psycho-social-cultural perspective.**

This study will look at how perimenopause and menopause affect daily life and lifestyle, and whether a course like “menopause walk with a Doc” can help with this. Activities that improve bone health can be difficult to fit into everyday life, and I would like to find out more about this.

The findings of the project will be valuable because women and other people experiencing perimenopause can find the experience difficult to manage. It will be helpful to understand the experience and what is useful and supportive in an intervention.

This research is being funded by the Lydia Osteoporosis Project (LOP) (lydiaosteoporosis.org). LOP is an organisation based at Queen Margaret University with a focus on osteoporosis as a public health issue. Projects run by LOP include investigating awareness of osteoporosis among healthcare workers and improving moving and handling practices to reduce the risk of fracture.

I am looking for volunteers to participate in the project. You are welcome to take part if you were assigned female sex at birth and are aged over 35 (or younger and have experienced premature menopause).

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be invited to take part in a focus group to discuss your experiences of menopause and taking part in the “Menopause Walk with a Doc” course with other members of the course. This will take place within two months of the course finishing.

Some of the questions in the focus group may be upsetting as they ask about the experience of perimenopause/menopause and stressors you may experience. I will be prepared to help you tell your story in a way that is comfortable for you and you can request to do things in a different way. I will provide you with a list of support organisations and signpost you to other sources of support if needed. You are free to withdraw from the study at any stage, and you would not have to give a reason. If you withdraw from the study, it will not affect your participation in the Health Agency “Menopause Walk with a Doc” course or any other aspect of your healthcare.

If you choose not to participate in the research, it will not stop you from participating in any of the Health Agency’s courses or other aspects of healthcare.

Any information you give me on forms and in audio recordings will be securely stored and deleted once I have moved it on to digital files, where I will ensure it will not be possible to identify you. These files will be stored securely on Queen Margeret University servers and will only be accessible to me and my supervisors, Dr Karen Matthews and Prof Cathy Bulley. Your name will be replaced with a participant number, and it will not be possible for you to be identified in any of the reports I write. There is a risk that what is shared in the group may be disclosed by group members. Therefore, when we are sharing in the group work, I will ask you all to keep everything that we share confidential.

The results may be published in a journal, presented at a conference, or presented in poster format at the Health Agency and other interested health services and to other people experiencing perimenopause and menopause.

All of your personal information will be treated as confidential in accordance with the terms of the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Processing your personal information is necessary for the performance of a public task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in us as the Data Controller (GDPR Article 6 (1)(e) and for statistical and research purposes (Article 89 GDPR).

Appropriate security measures will be used to protect your data. It will be treated with confidentiality and will not be shared with any third party without your permission. Your data will only be kept for as long as is necessary. You have the right to withdraw your consent to us processing your personal data at any time. to do so, please contact Dr Karen Matthews kmatthews@gmu.ac.uk . Please note that your data may be used before you withdraw consent, so contact us as soon as possible if you wish to withdraw your consent. We will destroy your identifiable data upon request, however we may need to use data collected up until that point. If you have any questions relating to the processing of your data which are not resolved by contacting Becca Freeden please contact the QMU Data Protection Officer - LKerr2@gmu.ac.uk

If you would like to contact an independent person who knows about this project but is not involved in it, you are welcome to contact Anne Wysock. Contact details are given below.

You will receive a £10 voucher for participating in the research.

If you have read and understood this information sheet, any questions you had have been answered, and you would like to be a participant in the study, please now see the consent form.

Contact details of the researcher

Name of researcher: Becca Freeden

Address: Postgraduate Student,
Division of Nursing and Paramedic Science,
School of Health Sciences
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
Queen Margaret University Drive
Musselburgh

East Lothian EH21 6UU

Email / Telephone: bfreeden@qmu.ac.uk / Phone number TBC

Contact details of the independent adviser:

Name of adviser: Anne Wysock

Address: Programme Lead, Physiotherapy
School of Health Sciences,
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
Queen Margaret University Drive
Musselburgh
East Lothian EH21 6UU

Email / Telephone: awysock@qmu.ac.uk / 0131 474 0000