

Participant Information Sheet

Research Title: Psychotherapists experiences of working psychotherapeutically in Ireland with women following an abortion; A Thematic Analysis

Researchers: Eileen O Sullivan, final year student of the Masters in Psychotherapy programme in Dublin City University (DCU) and Dr. Alice McEleney research supervisor at the School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health, DCU

Background:

Study Aim

The aim of this study is to explore psychotherapists, in Ireland, experiences of working psychotherapeutically with women following an abortion. It aims to explore psychotherapists experiences of the disclosure of an abortion and its impact on the therapeutic work and relationship. The research aims to explore what the therapists found rewarding and challenging when working with women following an abortion and if the therapist felt adequately prepared in the training they received to work with women following an abortion.

Traditionally, research has focused on the client's experience of having an abortion and there is a paucity of research exploring psychotherapists experiences of working with these women.

This research can help other psychotherapists develop their understanding of the issues that can present when working with women following an abortion, increasing the effectiveness of psychotherapy and promote positive client outcomes.

What does participation involve?

Your participation will involve a face-to-face interview at your place of work or DCU or a zoom interview, whichever is most convenient for you. The interview will last approximately one hour, followed by a short debriefing. The interview will be recorded on a digital audio device for face-to-face interviews and audio cloud recording on zoom. Before the interview, you will be required to read and sign a consent form

confirming your willingness to participate in the study. Those on zoom, can email a signed consent form to the researcher before the interview begins. The interview will contain approximately 9 questions regarding your experiences of working with women following an abortion.

How is your privacy protected?

All identifying information will be removed by the researcher and transcripts will be pseudo-anonymised and securely stored. Every effort will be made to protect your anonymity, however, due to the small number of interviewees and the use of direct quotation when writing up the study, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. It is possible you may be identified.

Potential benefits/risks

No direct benefits are anticipated, however, there is the opportunity for you to reflect on your own experiences of working with women following an abortion. There may be a slight risk that you could become distressed when reflecting on these experiences. In this event, you will be encouraged to discuss this with the researcher during debrief face-to-face and online, and if further support is needed, the researcher will direct you to the appropriate resources.

Limits of confidentiality

Confidentiality cannot be maintained in the event of a disclosure of information which involves a risk to you, another person or a child protection issue (Children First guidelines will be adhered to), or if professional malpractice is disclosed. If any of these issues should arise, the researcher and her supervisor will discuss its management with you.

Please note that confidentiality of the information you have provided can only be protected within the limitations of the law. Even if you withdraw from the research study, it is possible for the data to be subject to subpoena, a freedom of information claim or mandated reporting in the case of a child protection issue.

What type of personal data will be collected about me?

The following personal data will be collected for the purposes of describing the demographics of participants in study publications: age, gender, professional years qualified and psychotherapy training.

Do I have the right to withdraw from this study?

The choice to participate in this study is completely voluntary. As all research participants will be pseudo-anonymised, you can withdraw from the study at any time before publication. Please email the researcher or the principal investigator to withdraw from the research.

How will my data be used and disposed of?

Interview data will be typed up from the audio recordings in which the researcher hopes to identify key themes. All data will be stored securely on the researcher's laptop with passphrase access control and duo-authentication security measures in place. Any hard copy material that contains identifying data will be stored in a locked drawer in a locked office on the DCU campus to which access is restricted to the Principal Investigator and researcher. All of the data collected will be stored for one year following completion of the Masters programme. On 01 May 2025 the researcher will securely dispose of all digital or hard-copy materials. It is hoped that the completed research will be available at the DCU library. It is also anticipated that the findings will be submitted to psychotherapy journals for publication.

How will I find out what happens with the project?

All participants will be offered a one-page synopsis of the completed research study once the student has received a satisfactory result.

If you have any questions regarding the research, please contact the researcher: Eileen O Sullivan by email at eileen.osullivan89@mail.dcu.ie or alternatively the research supervisor: Dr. Alice McEleney at alice.mceleney@dcu.ie

This study will be conducted in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and if you have any concerns regarding how your data in this study has been handled, you can contact: DCU Data Protection Officer, Mr. Martin Ward – (data.protection@dcu.ie Tel: 01-7005118/01- 7008257) who will handle any data protection concerns arising from this research. An individual also has the right

to report a complaint concerning the use of personal data to the Irish Data Protection Commission: Data Protection Commissioner.

DCU is the Data controller in this study.