Participant Information Sheet for Focus Groups

Version No. 1.1_FG_24_02_26

Title of Project: The Bone Booster Study (Feasibility)

Researcher name: Dr. Vicky Stiles

Invitation

Thank you for taking part in testing The Bone Booster app. We would now like to invite you to register your interest in joining an online focus group to share your experiences.

Before deciding whether to take part, please read the information below carefully.

What is the purpose of the focus group?

The aim of these focus groups is to better understand your experience of using the Bone Booster app. We are interested in what worked well, what did not work so well, and whether and how the app could be improved. Your feedback will help us decide whether the app should be developed further.

What would taking part involve?

We will run three online focus groups, each with around five participants. The session will last approximately 60 minutes and will take place via a secure online platform (Zoom).

During the session, we will ask about:

- How useful you found the app
- How easy it was to use
- How it fitted into your daily life
- Any barriers to using it regularly
- Suggestions for improvement

There are no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your honest views and experiences.

How are participants selected?

Participants will be selected from those who express interest, with the aim of including a diverse range of ages, backgrounds, and levels of confidence with digital technology.

Recording and confidentiality

The focus groups will be recorded to ensure we accurately capture what is discussed. They will be transcribed, and once the transcripts have been checked for accuracy, all recordings will then be permanently deleted, meaning your name and any identifying information will be removed. All data will be handled confidentially and stored securely in line with data protection regulations.

Because this is a group discussion, we will ask all participants to respect each other's privacy and not share what is discussed outside the session.

Do I have to take part?

No. Taking part is entirely voluntary. If you decide to register your interest, you are free to withdraw at any time before or during the focus group without giving a reason.

How will my information be kept confidential?

The University of Exeter processes personal data for the purposes of carrying out research in the public interest. The University will endeavour to be transparent about its processing of your personal data and this information sheet should provide a clear explanation of this. If you do have any queries about the University's processing of your personal data that cannot be resolved by the research team, further information may be obtained from the University's Data Protection Officer by emailing informationgovernance@exeter.ac.uk. or at https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/cgr/ig/

Data will be managed in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and University of Exeter policies (https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/cgr/ig/policy/).

Files that contain personal details (such as your name or contact information) will be deleted after the transcripts have been checked. The anonymised transcripts will remain on a secure University SharePoint folder indefinitely. Only members of the research team will have access to this folder. Anonymised data will be stored securely and may be used in future ethically approved research. Your identifiable data will not be shared outside the research team.

Will I receive any payment for taking part?

Yes. If you take part in the follow-up focus group, you will receive £25 as a thank you for your time. This will be paid by bank transfer from the University of Exeter after the session.

What will happen to the results of this study?

The results will help us decide whether the app and the technology behind it should continue to be developed.

A summary of the findings may be published in academic journals and presented at conferences. No individual participants will be identified in any reports.

Additionally, the anonymised data will be securely stored indefinitely and used in future research projects exploring bone health, osteoporosis, or similar areas of digital technology.

Who is organising and funding this study?

This study is organised by researchers at the University of Exeter.

It is funded by the Medical Research Council (MRC) through a gap fund that supports early-stage development of new health technologies.

Who has reviewed this study?

This project has been reviewed by the Public Health and Sport Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Exeter (Reference Number 12397718).

Contact for any questions or requests regarding your participation in this research:

If you have any questions about the study or your participation, please contact the research team:

Email: bonebooster@exeter.ac.uk

To contact the Research Ethics Committee please email shs-ethics-admin@exeter.ac.uk

You can also contact the University Research Ethics and Governance Team if you wish to make a complaint or comment
please email cgr-reg@exeter.ac.uk,

or

Dr Sean Jennings
Head of Research Governance, Ethics and Compliance
University Research Services, University of Exeter
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Thank you for your interest in this project.

Consent to Take Part

- I confirm that I have read the information sheet (version 1.1_FG_24_02_26) for the focus groups. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation in this focus group is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.
- I understand that the focus group will be recorded and anonymously transcribed for analysis, and I give my permission to be recorded and my responses transcribed.
- I understand that my identifying details will be removed from the transcripts, and all recordings will be destroyed once transcription has occurred.
- I understand that the transcripts collected during the focus group, may be looked at by members from the research team, other individuals from The University of Exeter, and I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.
- I understand that my anonymised transcript will be:
  a. Stored indefinitely on the project database;
  b. Shared with other researchers for use in future research projects (secondary data analysis);
  c. Included in publications in academic journals, project websites, media publications;
  d. Included in teaching or training materials for use in university activities and public engagement activities.
- I agree to take part in the above study.