PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

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iCareiMove -- an online menopause programme (follow up focus group)

Thank you for taking part in the iCareiMove programme. We would now like to invite you to take part in an optional online focus group to share your experiences. Before you decide whether to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Please ask a member of the research team if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take your time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide to take part, you may keep this information sheet.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this focus group (a structured discussion) is to better understand your experiences of the iCareiMove online programme. The focus group will explore:

- Your experience of using the programme

- How easy it was to access and follow

- What worked well and what could be improved

This will help iCareiMove and the University of Exeter research team to refine the programme before a larger study.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited because you took part in the iCareiMove programme and you consented to us contacting you about this follow up focus group. Female participants over the age of 40 who expressed an interest in the follow on focus group are being invited to take part.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this sub-study. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your participation in the PROTECT Study.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree:

- You will join an online focus group (using the Microsoft Teams video call platform)

- The session will last 60--90 minutes

- A researcher will guide a group discussion

- You will be asked about your experiences of the programme

You do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with.

Recording of the session

The session will be audio and video recorded (with your consent) to ensure accuracy.

- Recordings will be transcribed

- All identifying information will be removed

- Recordings will be securely deleted within 4 weeks

You may choose to turn your camera off if you prefer.

What are the possible benefits and risks of taking part?

There are no direct personal benefits. Many previous participants in the iCareiMove intervention, that has been done over the last 20 years both face to face and as an online group, have found it enjoyable and beneficial to their wellbeing. You may find it helpful and enjoyable to share their experiences in a supportive group setting. The main advantage of this research is that participants will be taking part in an important study that could help develop an online programme to provide valuable menopause support. Your feedback will help:

- Improve the iCareiMove programme so it better supports women during menopause

- Inform future research and services designed to improve wellbeing and movement in mid-life

- Shape how similar programmes are delivered more widely

There is an extremely small risk that some people may find certain questions regarding menopausal symptoms and wellbeing difficult to answer. You should only answer those questions that you are comfortable with. You do not need to answer any questions that you are not sure about, or you do not wish to.

What will happen to the data I provide?

The University of Exeter is the sponsor for this study. In working with the PROTECT Study team we will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as data controller. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The PROTECT Study team will keep identifiable information about you and following your consent will share your contact details with the iCareiMove team. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible. All identifiable information about you will be securely stored on encrypted University of Exeter servers and only accessible to members of the research team.

You will be given a code and the screening questionnaire, menopause and wellbeing data will be stored securely under this code. The code linking you to this data will be stored separately by the PROTECT team, and destroyed 4 weeks after the final optional group discussion session, at which point all data will be anonymous. Anonymised feedback information collected as part of this study will be kept for 5 years in accordance with the PROTECT Study privacy policy. For more information about how the PROTECT Study uses your personal data, please see the PROTECT Study privacy policy.

If you agree to take part in the online discussion group, we will securely record the session and then transcribe the discussion removing all identifying information and destroy the recording 4 weeks after the group meeting. At this stage all the information from the group will be anonymous, and you will not be able to be identified.

Individuals from the University of Exeter may look at your research records to check the accuracy of the research study. The only people in the University of Exeter who will have access to information that identifies you will be people who need to contact you to discuss issues directly relating to the study or audit the data collection process.

Will participation be kept confidential?

Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All of the data collected as part of this project will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be held securely until the research is finished. No study data will be available in any identifiable format to anyone outside of the immediate research team. We may share anonymised data from this study with other researchers, within the remit of PROTECT study policy and following necessary approvals.

All data for analysis will be anonymised. In reporting on the research findings, we will not reveal the names of any participants. All research staff are provided with training regarding GDPR and University of Exeter standards for handling data. Any data provided electronically will be stored on a database on a restricted server only accessible by specified members of the research team who have been given authorisation to access the database.

Questions, comments and requests about your personal data can be sent to:

The Administrator

PROTECT Study

College House 1.23

St Luke's Campus

The University of Exeter

Exeter, EX1 2LU

United Kingdom

Alternatively, you may also contact the University of Exeter's Data Protection Officer who is responsible for monitoring compliance with relevant legislation in relation to personal data, by emailing dataprotection@exeter.ac.uk.

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk/concerns.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

Your decision to participate in this study is voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason by logging into your PROTECT Study account and clicking on the Withdraw from Study option in the Manage Account section of the website. Alternatively, you can contact the PROTECT Study helpdesk by emailing support.protect@exeter.ac.uk or by telephoning 01392 725010. By withdrawing you are making the decision not to provide any further information or responses to the study and you will not receive any further communications about it. However, if you withdraw from the study, we will retain all anonymised data that we have collected up to the time you withdraw. This includes all anonymised data from questionnaires.

Who is organising this study?

This sub-study is being led by University of Exeter and iCAREiMOVE, nested within the main PROTECT Study, which is led by the University of Exeter, King's College London and South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. This study has been granted full ethical approval from the University of Exeter Medical School Ethics Committee (Application ID 12103159).

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact the PROTECT helpdesk by emailing support.protect@exeter.ac.uk.

What if there is a problem?

If you wish to complain or have concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, you can contact the University of Exeter Medical School Ethics Committee (uemsethics@exeter.ac.uk).

Additional information and Frequently Asked Questions are available on the PROTECT Study website. If this does not answer your query you can contact the PROTECT Study team by calling 01392 725010.

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.

Consent to Take Part

- I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Information Sheet version V2.0 dated 30/04/2026 for the above study, sponsored by the University of Exeter. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions, which have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation 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 consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me via the Participant Information Sheet. I understand that such information will be handled and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other Data Protection Laws.
- I understand that the focus group will be audio and video recorded to enable the discussion to be transcribed and then anonymised.
- I understand that confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed in a group setting, but participants will be asked to respect privacy.
- I understand that my information may be subject to review by responsible individuals from the University of Exeter for monitoring and audit purposes.
- If I choose to withdraw, I understand that all anonymised data will be retained in the study up to the point of my withdrawal, and no further data will be collected.
- I agree to take part in the study.