INFORMATION SHEET

Sepsis Recognition in the Older Adult: A non-clinical perspective.

Project Overview

This research project is a study seeking to understand the lived experience and perception of non-clinical persons (18 years or over) who are ‘known and familiar’ with an older adult (75 years or over) who has been diagnosed with sepsis.

The aim of this research study is to discover through the sharing of the experiences of carers/family of older adults with sepsis an understanding of sepsis recognition in older adults from a non-clinical perspective. In gaining an understanding these experiences may provide insights into early recognition of sepsis signs and symptoms in the older adult, the roles that carers/family fulfill in sepsis recognition, and influencing factors associated with sepsis recognition.

The research study has been designed (IPA) specifically to understand participants 'lived' experiences and will be collected through semi structured interviews. IPA seeks a 'true' or 'real' understanding of the phenomenon of sepsis recognition in the older adult in its natural state.

Findings arising from this study have the potential to inform strategies designed to capitalise on non-clinical carers/family contribution to early recognition of sepsis in older adults, improving patient outcomes. If we identify the barriers of early identification, and the roles carers play in sepsis recognition then we can develop strategies to facilitate early sepsis recognition in the older adult. Early recognition of sepsis in the pre -hospital setting has the potential to save lives, reduce health costs and improve the quality of life of our most vulnerable population.

Participation Procedure

You are invited to participate in an interview which consists of several questions as needed to draw out your experience with sepsis in the older adult. You may have heard the term “blood poisoning” or “infection in the blood” used instead of sepsis. You will be encouraged to support any statements with examples to aid the researcher in gaining a good understanding of your experience. The interview will be audio recorded with your consent. Completion of the interview will take around 45 to 60 minutes. The interview will be held in person or virtually via Zoom or MS Teams at a time organised with the researcher. Participation in this project will not affect your employment, academic standing or association with the University. Should you unable to complete the interview in one sitting for any reason, you will be offered an additional session and opportunity to complete the interview.

Benefits and Risks

There may be no direct benefit to you for participating in this project other than a gift card as recognition of the your time in participating in this study. It is expected that this project has the potential to inform strategies designed to capitalise on non-clinicians’ contribution to early recognition of sepsis in older adults, improving patient outcomes.

We do not anticipate that participation in this research will cause you any undue discomfort beyond that experienced in normal day to day living. However, there is potential risk in the telling of your experience particularly if the experience or outcome was not good that this may be upsetting and potentially distressing for you. The researcher will throughout the interview be alert for any signs of distress and will pause the interview to check in with you and your consent before continuing with the interview.

Please know however there is no ability or expectation of the researcher to provide any therapeutic intervention during or after the interview.

If you are concerned, please consider viewing the support available at www.lifeline.org.au or contacting your General Practitioner or accessing professional support through your employee assistance program.

Confidentiality

The interview will not collect any identifying information; your responses will be confidential.

We will not use your name in any outputs discussing the research. Despite our efforts taken to protect your identity, you may be inadvertently identifiable to others if your life experiences are unique.

Data will be securely stored in accordance with the CQUniversity Code of Conduct for Research and CQUniversity policy.

It is anticipated that the data may be of value to future research, as such the data is not intended to be disposed of.

Outcome

The outcome of this research will be a thesis and the research results will be disseminated in the form of journal articles and conferences. A Plain English summary of results will be made available should you request a copy, and you provide contact details on the consent form.

Consent

Your consent to participate in this project will be obtained through your completion of the accompanying Informed Consent Form.

Right to Withdraw

Your participation is voluntary. You are free to end the interview, without penalty, by informing the interviewer. Any data already provided will be withdrawn. If you complete the interview, and once data analysis has commenced, it will not be possible to withdraw your data.

Feedback

A short summary of the project's findings in plain English will be available in June 2024. To request a copy, please indicate this on the consent form and provide contact details.

Questions/ Further Information

If you have any questions about this project, please contact the Chief Investigator Annette Horton via Annette.Horton@cqumail.com

This project has been approved by the CQUniversity Human Research Ethics Committee, approval number 0000023401

Please contact Central Queensland University's Research Division (Tel: 07 4923 2603; E-mail: ethics@cqu.edu.au) should there be any concerns about the nature and/or conduct of this research project.