



Information Letter

The Experiences of Therapists Working within Session-Limited Models

We invite you to participate in a research study looking at the experiences of therapists who currently work or have worked within a session-limited counselling model. This study is being completed as part of a Master's Degree in Counselling, supervised by Dr Hugo Gonzales at Murdoch University in Western Australia.

Nature and Purpose of the Study

In attempting to address the problem of increasing mental health issues, session limits on counselling have been imposed by governments, agencies and insurance companies. There has been some research on the impact of session-limited therapy on the therapeutic process and client outcomes, however, no studies to date have focussed on the experiences of therapists working within such a model.

The aim of this study is to give voice to the subjective experiences of therapists providing session-limited therapy, for the purpose of gathering rich, meaningful data to inform future planning and research.

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the interview process that you will be asked to complete. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have, and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.

What the Study will Involve

To participate in the study, you must be a psychologist, counsellor or social worker, and have membership of a professional body. You must have worked or currently work with clients in a session-limited model.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to volunteer for an interview, which will take 60 minutes of your time. The interview will be conducted online, using Skype, Zoom, Microsoft teams or a similar application, and it will be audio recorded. This is necessary for accurate transcription of the interview.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw without discrimination or prejudice. Please note, however, that withdrawal will not be possible once the data are anonymised and can no longer be linked to any individual.

Privacy

Your privacy is very important and all information collected is treated as confidential. No names or other details that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research.

Benefits of the Study

It is possible that there may be no direct benefit to you from participation in this study. While there is no guarantee that you will personally benefit, the knowledge gained from your participation may help others in the future, and may be used to inform governments, policy-makers, service providers and educators in planning and designing evidence-based counselling guidelines and programs.

Possible Risks

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, if you do become distressed or anxious you will be advised to seek support from your clinical supervisor, Employee Assistance Program, or a relevant helpline, such as BeyondBlue or Lifeline. If at any point during the interview you become anxious or upset, you may take a break or cease the interview.

Further Information

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact the project's Chief Investigator, Dr Hugo Gonzales, on 08 9360 6442, who will be happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have. This study has been approved by Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee. If required, verification of approval can be obtained from Dr Hugo Gonzales.

Once we have analysed the information from this study we will email you a summary of our findings. You can expect to receive this feedback within one month of completion of the project.

If you are willing to consent to participation in this study, please complete the attached Consent Form.

We very much appreciate your assistance with this research project.

Yours sincerely

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This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2020/071). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University's Research Ethics Office (Tel. (+61 8) 9360 6677) or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.



Interview Consent Form

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I have read the participant Information Sheet, which explains the nature of the research and the possible risks. The information has been explained to me and all of my questions have been satisfactorily answered. I have been given a copy of the Information Sheet to keep.

I agree to volunteer for an interview to be conducted via Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams or another suitable online application, and to be audio recorded as part of this research. This is necessary for accurate transcription of the data. I understand that I do not have to answer particular questions if I do not want to and that I can withdraw without discrimination or prejudice. However, I acknowledge that withdrawal is not possible once the data are anonymised and can no longer be linked to any individual. Should I become anxious or upset at any point in the interview, I will be able to take a break or cease the interview.

I agree that research data from the results of the study may be published provided my name and any identifying data is not used. I have also been informed that I may not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study.

I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researchers to a third party unless required to do so by law.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Signature of participant: _____ Date: _____

I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this study to the above participant. I have explained the study and answered all questions asked of me.

Researcher's Name (please print): _____

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____