

INFORMATION LETTER

Dear potential participant,

You are invited to participate in our research study, **"Mapping Midwifery Care in Northern Ontario: An Intersectional Mixed Methods Study."** Your participation is entirely voluntary. Before you decide whether or not you would like to take part in this study, please read this letter carefully to understand what is involved. After you have read the letter, please ask any questions you may have, as we would be happy to answer them.

PURPOSE

The proposed project aims to examine and understand midwifery care in Northern Ontario and to collaborate and co-create ways to foster the sustainability of the profession and the provision of culturally safe, equitable midwifery care.

The Principal Investigator for this project is Dr. Kirsty Bourret, a Registered Midwife and an External Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Health Sciences, Lakehead University. Lisa Bishop, Indigenous Midwife, Dilico Anishnabek Family Care is a Co-Investigator. Dr. Helle Møller, Associate Professor, Department of Health Sciences, Lakehead University is a Co-Investigator. Dr. Patrick Timony, Senior Research Associate Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR), Laurentian University, is a Co-Investigator. Dr. Susan James, (Professor Emerita), Laurentian University is a Co-Investigator. Annisea Hopkins has previous experience as a Doula and is a Client Partner for the project. The role of the client partner will be focused on the project's collection, analysis and knowledge translation/exchange activities. Laija Beaulieu is a graduate student researcher in the Department of Social Justice Studies, Lakehead University and is under the supervision of Dr. Helle Møller. This research is supported by funding from the Association of Ontario Midwives (AOM).

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

The information that will be collected aims to understand midwifery care in Northern Ontario and to collaborate and co-create ways to foster the sustainability of the profession and the provision of culturally safe, equitable midwifery care. Midwifery in Northern Ontario could be a vital solution in filling the maternity gaps in the region by reducing distances to travel and providing appropriate concordant care models. Therefore, it is important to understand the health service implications of integrating midwives into Northern Ontario. This understanding can provide a foundation to support further midwifery's contribution to sustainable Northern maternity care services in Ontario.

WHAT IS REQUESTED OF ME AS A PARTICIPANT?

You are asked to participate in an individual interview that will take approximately 30-60 minutes of your time. The interview will take place at your convenience either in-person, via Zoom, or by telephone. In-person interviews can be conducted in a setting that is most comfortable for you. The Zoom platform will need to be downloaded, and a stable internet connection is required. If preferred, a focus group could also be conducted rather than an individual interview. The focus group may take up to 90 minutes of your time and can take place either in-person or by using Zoom. Your audio-recorded interview will be transcribed verbatim. You can be interviewed in French, English, or the language of your choice. We also offer interviews with Indigenous or Black and People of Colour (BPOC) researchers at your request.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT?

As a participant, you are under no obligation to participate and you are free to withdraw at any time during the interview without penalty. You also have the right to withdraw your data from the study up until the data collection phase of the study is complete which will be approximately one month after the initial interview. Beyond this point, there will be no way to connect you to your data. You will not be interviewed by someone known to you as your midwife or someone who is teaching or supervising you. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your current or future care with a midwife, employment or academic status. To withdraw from the study, contact Dr. Kirsty Bourret at bourretk@mcmaster.ca or (905) 512-6681. Alternatively, you may contact Lisa Bishop at lisa.bishop@sympatico.ca or 1-807-630-7959, Dr. Helle Møller at hmoeller@lakeheadu.ca or 807-343-8010 ext. 8965, Dr. Patrick Timony at pe_timony@laurentian.ca or (705) 675-1151 ext. 4298, or Dr. Susan James at sjames@laurentian.ca or (705) 671-4064.

If you would like to review your transcript for accuracy, please mark 'yes' on the Consent Form in the section where you are asked if you'd like to review the draft copy and/or the final copy. You are free to add or remove anything from your transcript. You will be able to indicate your preferred mailing or email address.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND BENEFITS?

While we foresee no risk or harm to any participants in this research, we acknowledge that you might feel distressed regarding past or current experiences or with providing or receiving care. You are not required to answer any questions you are uncomfortable answering. Should you feel upset during or after the study, we encourage you to contact any of the following free-of-charge support services:

Thunder Bay Counselling Centre Walk-In/Talk-In Counselling (807) 684-1880	Good2Talk (24-Hour Student Helpline) 1-866-925-5454 Text GOOD2TALK to 686868	Thunder Bay 24-hr Crisis Response (807) 346-8282	Wellness Together Canada 1-866-585-0445 1-855-242-3310 (Indigenous Peoples) Text WELLNESS to 741741
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If you agree to take part in this interview or focus group, there may or may not be any direct benefit to you. However, the views and experiences of participants will improve the understanding of the issues facing midwifery in Northern Ontario. Thus this is a unique opportunity to have your voice heard and to contribute to future decisions to address the issues and perhaps improve access to midwifery care, which will benefit both midwives and their clients.

You will be offered a \$25 honorarium for your participation in the study to acknowledge your time and as a thank you for sharing your experiences.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. Any identifying information in the data collected (transcribed interviews) will be removed and/or replaced with pseudonyms; a participant ID will be assigned; any material linking your name to your participant ID will be securely kept in Dr. Helle Møller's office on the Lakehead University campus and/or saved on an encrypted external hard drive, and after the completion of the data collection and analysis phase, the list linking your participant ID to your name will be destroyed. Only the primary investigators named in this letter will have access to the confidential and identifying information.

If you agree to participate in a focus group, your identity will be known to other participants in the same group. We ask that participants keep the content of the focus group and the identities of fellow participants confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed. We also ask that participants not record the focus group; however, we cannot guarantee that our request has been honoured.

If you have concerns about your identity remaining confidential, we would like to work together with you to implement strategies to reduce this risk.

WHAT WILL MY DATA BE USED FOR?

Planned knowledge exchange activities include presentations to stakeholders in Northern Ontario which will be in person or virtual, scientific publications and presentations at national or international scholarly conferences. In addition, the team will work with the Association of

Ontario Midwives (AOM) to develop any other deliverables that may be used to advocate for midwifery at the provincial level. For example, briefing notes or media releases.

WHERE WILL MY DATA BE STORED?

Any paper copies of data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Helle Møller's office. Audio and/or video recordings will be stored on an encrypted external hard drive. The electronic database containing data from paper copies will be stored on an encrypted external hard drive. The data gathered from this research project will be securely stored indefinitely and may be used in a format where you are not identified for future academic research at Lakehead University.

HOW CAN I RECEIVE A COPY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS?

If you would like to receive a summary of the findings following the completion of the study, please mark 'yes' on the Consent Form in the section where asked if you'd like to receive a copy of the final research findings. You will be able to indicate your preferred mailing or email address.

WHAT IF I WANT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

You have the right to withdraw your data from the study up until the data collection phase of the study is complete (approximately one month after the interview). Beyond this point, there will be no way to connect you to your data. Please contact one or any of the primary researchers in this letter to withdraw from the study.

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION:

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RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

The Lakehead University Research Ethics Board has reviewed and approved this research study. If you have any questions related to the research ethics and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8010 ext. 8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.