

## **Participant Information Sheet (PIS)**

### **Digital Divide - Overcoming Digital Exclusion in Rural Wales**

**Project Team:** University of Wales Trinity Saint David (Wales Institute of Digital Information) and the Hywel Dda University Health Board.

#### **What is this research about?**

We are exploring the barriers that prevent people in rural communities across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, and Pembrokeshire from using digital technology and online services. We want to understand your experiences to give our recommendations on how to improve digital inclusion.

#### **Why have you been invited?**

You have been invited because :

- You live in West Wales
- You have experience with people who are digitally excluded.
- You work in a community related to digital access.

#### **What will I be asked to do?**

If you agree to take part,

- The session will last for about 30 minutes to 60 minutes.
- You can choose how much or how little you want to share.
- You can take a break or leave at any time.
- Everything you say will be kept anonymous and confidential.

To help you prepare, we have listed the topics and questions we will discuss.

You do not need to prepare anything in advance, and there are no right or wrong answers; we want to hear about your experiences.

We will also send you a scheduling poll so you can choose a date and time that works best for you.

1. Digital Access
  - What challenges do you think those who are digitally excluded face in getting reliable internet access?
  - Do they have access to devices such as a smartphone, tablet or computer?
  - How does connectivity affect their daily life?
2. Digital skills and confidence
  - How confident do you think they feel using digital devices and online services from your experiences?
  - Do they find specific digital tasks difficult or frustrating?
3. Experiences using Digital services
  - What are your experiences in helping them get online (booking services)?

- What will make digital health services easier for them?
4. Living in a Rural area
    - How does living in a rural community affect their ability to get online?
    - Are there local factors (distance, broadband, support) that make digital use more complicated?
  5. Support needs and solutions
    - What support will make them feel more confident using digital tools or services?
    - Would training, local hubs, one-to-one help? Or does better internet access make a difference?
    - What will an idea digital support look like for your community?

Your input is extremely valuable. The insights gathered from these sessions will help shape the Digital Inclusion Framework for Hywel Dda University Health Board and improve support across rural communities in Wales.

### **Voluntary participation**

Your involvement is entirely voluntary.

You may:

- Skip any question
- Take a break at any time
- Leave the session at any point without giving a reason

### **Benefits**

Your feedback will:

- Will help us understand the local needs
- Inform digital inclusion support.
- Improve equity in access to online services

### **Possible risks**

There are no significant risks. You may discuss sensitive or frustrating experiences. You are free not to share anything that feels uncomfortable.

### **Will my Data be kept confidential?**

Yes, we will

- Remove all the names and identifiable information.
- Use anonymised quotes
- Store recordings and notes securely
- Comply fully with GDPR
- Only share findings in anonymised form.

**What happens next?**

If you agree to participate, we will ask you to sign the consent form.

**Thank you.**

If you have any questions before the session, please contact

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