

Supporting employment and mental health in brain injured women survivors of intimate partner violence: Addressing gaps in knowledge and support.

Dear Participant

We are inviting you to participate in an individual interview or focus group with a member of our research team. We are conducting a research study investigating the barriers and facilitators faced by women with intimate partner violence-related traumatic brain injury related to employment and mental health and addictions with the goal of improving support services in these areas. We would appreciate hearing your thoughts and opinions on this matter. Your input, along with the input of other Executive Directors, front line workers, employers, and women survivors, will be used to develop materials to increase knowledge and education of relevant issues and provide recommendations on supports for service providers. The sample materials will be tested in appropriate service organizations serving women survivors of intimate partner violence.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You can decide not to participate, decline to answer any question, or stop participating at any time. If you choose to participate, your opinions will be used to create educational materials and/or recommendations for practice. Interviews can be held over the phone or via video conferencing, depending on preference and location and are expected to last between 30-60 minutes at most. Focus groups will be held via video or phone conferencing and are expected to last between 60-90 minutes. Groups and interviews will be led by a member of our research team or a trained facilitator. The focus groups/interviews will be audio-recorded for future analysis. We will collect some descriptive information about study participants. The information collected will also be included in publications and presented at conferences and workshops. No one employed at your agency will be part of the group and they will not hear the recordings from the discussion.

A list of interview questions is part of this research package. We have included these questions so that you can think about them ahead of time.

This study has been funded by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation and has been approved by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

Risks & Benefits

The risks that may result from your participation are minimal. There is a chance that some of the questions or topics discussed may make you uncomfortable or upset. **Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.** If you feel uncomfortable in any way you do not have to participate. You are welcome to take a break, or you may completely withdraw your participation at any time. There are no consequences for withdrawal, but please be aware that any comments recorded during a group session will not be able to be removed from the study.

Contact information for support services and help-lines are included in this research package if you are interested in talking to someone for emotional support after the interviews or focus groups.

There are no benefits to you for participating in this study, but this work may help Executive Directors, front line workers, employers, and women survivors dealing with intimate partner violence-related traumatic brain injury, employment, and mental health and addictions in the future.



Privacy and Confidentiality

All information obtained during the study will be held in strict confidence, and will not be shared with anyone outside of the study unless required by law. Because you will be asked not to identify yourself or your organization during the discussion, no personally identifiable information will be captured during the audio recordings. However, it is possible that other members of the focus group may be able to identify you during the conversation. We request all participants maintain confidentiality following the focus groups but cannot guarantee this.

Only members of the research team and a transcriber will have access to the recordings. Transcripts and participant demographic information will only be accessible to the research team.

Your name will only be associated with this form which will be stored separately from other study data. Your demographic information will be collected via phone and stored separately from both this consent form and interview transcripts.

Recordings, transcripts, and other study materials will be stored in locked cabinets and/or secure computer networks within a research lab at the University of Toronto. While we cannot guarantee confidentiality of electronically transmitted documents, we will minimize this risk through the use of a secure direct access link to the University of Toronto servers for participant communication, data storage, and transfer. **De-identified information in the form of paper transcript copies may also be securely stored offsite for the purposes of analysis and/or design and development of educational materials.**

Representatives of the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board may look at the study records to make sure that the study follows proper laws and guidelines.

Data Security and Retention

When the study is complete, electronic and paper copies of the information you share will be kept for 7 years after the publication of this research, which is common research practice, and recommended by scientific journals. After 7 years, all of your confidential data will be destroyed.

Withdrawal

If you choose to withdraw, any information that the research team may have that could identify you will be destroyed within one week of withdrawal. Any recorded information you provide during an interview may be removed from the study as well if you request it; however, recorded information provided during a focus group cannot be withdrawn as we will not be able to identify a single voice within the group. If you choose to withdraw after results have been published, we will be unable to remove your data from that publication.

Compensation

We know that your time is valuable and we appreciate that you are willing to share it with us. We will be happy to send you summaries of the discussions if you wish and share copies of findings and recommendations.

Dissemination

The results of this study will be made public through scientific and lay publications, presentations, and through our website and possibly organizational websites (e.g., WomenatthecentrE, Women's Habitat, the Acquired Brain Injury Research Lab at the University of Toronto/Toronto Rehab, Brain Injury Canada, DisAbled Women's Network Canada/ Réseau d'Action des Femmes Handicapées du



Canada) to advance knowledge and provide accountability to the public. You will not be named in any reports, publications, or presentations that may come from this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions, concerns or would like to speak to the study team for any reason, please call Dr. Angela Colantonio, Halina (Lin) Haag, or Danielle Toccalino at 416-978-8591 or email us at onfstudy@utoronto.ca. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or have concerns about this study, call the University of Toronto **Research Ethics office at 416-946-3273 or email them at ethics.review@utoronto.ca**. This study was reviewed and approved by the Wilfrid Laurier University Research Ethics Board under file number 6611. You may contact them with any questions via Jayne Kalmar, PhD, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-0710, extension 3131 or REBChair@wlu.ca. You are welcome to call or email anytime if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Angela Colantonio, PhD
Professor,
Rehabilitation Sciences Institute, University of Toronto
Senior Scientist, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute-UHN
angela.colantonio@utoronto.ca



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Statement of Consent:

By signing this form, you consent to participate in Phase 1 of the study. You agree that all your concerns and questions about this study have been addressed and understand that you can contact the research team or the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board if you have any further questions.

Print Name	Signature	Date
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Contact Information where you can be safely reached to set up an interview or focus group:

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Can we leave a message at the above contact?:

- Yes
- No

In the event that you appear distressed during the interview or focus group, may we contact you using the information provided above to follow up?

- Yes
- No

Witness

Print Name	Signature	Date
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Optional Consent for Re-Contact:

It is possible that we may wish to re-contact you after your initial interview/focus group session in order to confirm details, check in with you regarding our analysis, or seek further information or clarification. Also, there are two more phases to this study: a test phase during which organizations will be asked to use the materials and/or recommendations developed for a period of 2-4 months; and an evaluation phase during which feedback and comments will be sought to determine efficacy and viability of the materials and/or recommendations developed. You may choose to participate in a Phase 1 interview and not provide consent for re-contact if you wish.

May we use the contact information you provided above to re-contact you for these purposes?

- Yes
- No

Your Initials: