**Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title: Frontline ambulance service staff cultural competence: an Exploratory-Descriptive Qualitative study**

**Invitation to take part.**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information sheet. You are being invited to take part in this research study. Before you decide to take part or not, we would like you to understand the details of the study. This sheet will provide you with information on why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read it carefully. Choosing to participate is completely voluntary.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

The aim of this study is to explore frontline ambulance service staff’s development, experiences, and opinions of cultural competence. Cultural competence is an essential element in healthcare. It is closely tied with person-centred care as it involves understanding the needs of the individual and tailoring the care provided to these needs when possible, which is integral to patient care. This project uses Charbonneau et al’s (2009) definition of cultural competence, described as *“a process in which an understanding of cultural attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices is used to help guide care for an individual, taking into consideration specific history and needs, and avoiding the use of stereotypes and personal biases”.*  Cultural competence is impacted by different factors, both within and outside of our control, on personal and systematic levels. This study wants to explore frontline staff’s experiences and thoughts around cultural competence, its associated diversity training and importance on professional practice. This is an understudied area of research that we need to understand better.

**Who is being included in this study?**

We are inviting any current frontline ambulance service staff over the age of 18, working in an NHS ambulance trust in England to take part in this study.

**Do I have to take part?**

Taking part in this research study is entirely voluntary. Deciding to take part or not in this study will have no impact on your work. If you decide to take part you will be able to download this information sheet to keep, and you will be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to pause the interviews at any time. You can refuse to answer specific questions. You can withdraw and leave the study at any time for any reason, with no consequences. If you do withdraw we will ask if you wish your data to be included in the analysis and will follow your instructions. Once the interview is complete, we will again check you are happy for your data to be used. You have up to two weeks after the interview to withdraw your data, after this point your interview cannot be removed from the analysis.

**What will happen if I do take part?**

If you do take part in the study you will be invited to take part in the interview. Interviews will approximately take 1 hour to complete. The interviews will be audio-recorded and will take place online via MS Teams. The recording is for data analysis purposes only. The recording with be auto-transcribed using MS Teams software, and checked against the recording for accuracy and amended as needed. Once the recordings have been accurately transcribed, recordings will be permanently deleted. The interviews will focus on your development, experiences and perspectives of cultural competence, its associated diversity training and importance on professional practice. You will be asked to sign the consent form before taking part in the interview. You will be offered the opportunity to review the transcript of the interview. If you opt-in to review the interview transcript it will be sent to you for review, which we ask you to complete within a fortnight.

At the end of the interview you will be asked if you wish to receive a copy of the report of this study. We will ask what format is most accessible for you (e.g., electronic or hard copy, standard or large print) and we will try to meet your access needs. Should you opt-in, your information details will be kept for only 1 year. We will also ask if you are willing for us to keep your email address so the research team at the University of East Anglia can contact you about any future research projects in a similar area. Your details will not be used for any marketing purposes and will only be kept for 5 years should you agree to provide it.

**What will I have to do?**

If you choose to take part, we will need to arrange a time for the interview at your convenience. The interviews will approximately take 1 hour to complete. They will typically be conducted online via MS Teams, however other arrangements can be made.

**Access arrangements**

It is important for us to ensure there are no access barriers to you taking part in this study. Interviews will usually take place online via MS Teams. However, if you would prefer to do the interview via telephone, please contact Hafsa Mahumud at h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk to arrange this. All interviews will be conducted in English. Please contact Hafsa Mahumud at h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk about your access needs and we will try our best to accommodate your needs.

**What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks of taking part in this study. However, the questions in the interview aim to explore your experiences, thoughts, and perspectives in relation to cultural competence, its associated diversity training, and its importance in professional practice. We recognise that it could be uncomfortable to discuss these topics, however we ensure you that the aim of the research is not to form judgement of staff, but to gain an understanding of the topic from the staff perspective. Additionally, this study is being undertaken with an appreciative inquiry philosophical approach. This means that our focus is on gaining an understanding from the perspective of what is going well and how can we continue to improve. You are free to pause the interview at any time, not answer any questions or withdraw from the study. If you feel you need support for your mental wellbeing, or feel distressed after completing the interview, we highly recommend seeking support from the mental health charity [MIND](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/).

It is possible that you may disclose instances of professional misconduct or malpractice during the interview. In these circumstances, we are obligated to follow the [University of East Anglia’s safeguarding processes.](https://www.uea.ac.uk/f/185167/x/4fadf36737/safeguarding-policy-2024-25.pdf) If you were to disclose professional misconduct or malpractice during the interview, the researcher would make a safeguarding referral using the appropriate forms from the University. This would put the researcher in contact with the designated safeguarding lead, and both of them would discuss the concern(s) further and the referral may be actioned. If necessary the referral may need to be forwarded to relevant bodies and this would be done by the researcher in support with the safeguarding lead.

The potential benefits of taking part in this study is the opportunity to contribute to the understanding of cultural competence in frontline ambulance service staff. This understanding is necessary to support staff, students, and ambulance services at large. It is also important and could lead to recommendations for education, training, and continuous personal and professional development.

**What will happen if I withdraw and no longer want to take part in the study?**

You are free to not answer any of the interview questions or to stop the interview at any time. You are also able to withdraw from the study for any reason with no consequence. You will have 2 weeks after the interview is completed to decide whether you wish to withdraw from the study. Unless you specify that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be destroyed and your answers and the information you provided will not be used in the study. You will not be able to withdraw after 2 weeks as your interview transcript will have been anonymised, and we would not be able to identify your individual response.

**Will my involvement in the study remain confidential?**

Yes, your involvement in our study will remain confidential and anonymous in line with ethical and legal requirements. Any information you give will be treated in confidence. Only the research team has access to your data. Once interview recordings are transcribed, the recording will be deleted permanently. Transcripts of the interviews will be anonymised, and you will be allocated a pseudonym. All identifiable information such as your age, years of working experience etc. will be grouped into ranges alongside other participant information. This is in order for us to gain a general understanding of the individuals who participated in the research. Your name will be removed, and you will be given a fictitious name. Quotes may be used from your interview, however these will be anonymised and you will not be identified from them.

**How will we use information about you?**

We will need to use information from you for this research project. This information will include your:

* Age range
* Disability status
* Gender identity
* Job role
* Level of education
* Race and ethnicity
* Religious beliefs
* Sexual orientation
* Socio-economic background
* Contact details (if you opt-in to being contacted to receive a copy of the report or about future research)

People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly.

People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a pseudonym instead. We will keep all information about you safe and secure. Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

**What are your choices about how your information is used?**

* If you agree to take part in this study, you will have the option to take part in future research using your data saved from this study. If you consent to being contacted about future research, your personal information will be kept for 5 years by the research team and they may contact you between this time about future research.

**Where can you find out more about how your information is used?**

You can find out more about how we use your information

* at [www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/)
* our leaflet available from [www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch](http://www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch)
* by asking one of the research team
* by sending an email to dataprotection@uea.ac.uk or
* by ringing us on 07795353234.

**What happens to the results of the study?**

This project will contribute towards Hafsa Mahumud’s PhD dissertation. The results of this study will be shared in reports to ambulance services and in research publications. We aim to also present the results at conferences. You will not be identifiable in any of these.

**Will there be any financial costs?**

No, there are no costs to you as this is an online interview.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

The study is organised by the researcher and supervisory team. The study is being undertaken in partial fulfilment of a PhD, which is being funded by the University of East Anglia via a PhD studentship. The University of East Anglia is the sponsor organisation of this research.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

The study has been reviewed and granted approval by the University of East Anglia’s Faculty of Medicine and Health’s Research Ethics Committee, reference ETH2324-2277.

**Further information**

If you would like to discuss further or ask any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with the postgraduate research student at h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk.

**Concerns of complaints**

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk. If you would prefer to contact another member of the research team, you can contact my primary supervisor at the following address:

Dr Katherine Deane,

School of Health Sciences,

University of East Anglia,

Norwich, NR4 7TJ

k.deane@uea.ac.uk

If you have any concerns or complaints about this study and wish to contact someone independent from the study, please contact:

Professor Kenda Crozier,

Head of School of Health Sciences,

University of East Anglia,

Norwich, NR4 7TJ

k.crozier@uea.ac.uk

**Data management information**

Data management will be in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the University of East Anglia’s [Research Data Management Policy](https://www.uea.ac.uk/documents/20142/130807/RINopen-researchresearch-data-management-policy.pdf/f1b1f3d6-4b8e-d2f7-2dfc-8512d6249bd8?t=1590588842221). As per data protection legislation, we must inform you that the legal basis for processing your data as stated in Article 6(1) of the UK GDPR, is as this allows us to process personal data when it is necessary to perform our public duties as a university.

Further data management information:

* Recordings of interviews will be destroyed once interviews are transcribed.
* Your information will only be accessed by the research team. All information will be anonymised and you will be assigned a pseudonym.
* Identifiable information will be destroyed, once information is anonymised.
* Participant personal information (name and email address) will only be collected if the participant wishes to receive a copy of the report, or to be contacted in future about research. This information will only be accessed by the research team and will either be destroyed 1 year or 5 years after the study.
* Data from the interviews, which will be anonymous, will be stored on the secure University of East Anglia shared drive for 10 years. Interview data will be deleted from the drive 10 years after the project ends.
* The data controller is the University of East Anglia.
* For further information you can contact the University’s Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.uk
* You can learn more about your data protection rights at the [Information Commissioner’s Office](https://ico.org.uk/).
* If you have any worries with how your personal data has been used, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.uk in the first instance.

**Okay, I want to take part – what next?**

You will need to contact me at h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk to express your interest to take part. We will then send you a consent form, which will need to be filled in and sent to h.mahumud@uea.ac.uk. We will also arrange a time for the interview that is convenient for you. Please keep this information sheet and the consent form for your information.

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

**Thank you for reading it.**