



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

FACTOR-INWENTASH
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of research project:

Amplifying Youth Voice in Advancing Access to Abortion for Under-served Populations through Tools for Healthcare Professionals and People Seeking Care

Investigator:

The Lead Researcher for this study is Dr. Stephanie Begun, Assistant Professor at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW), University of Toronto, and Co-Director of the Youth Wellness Lab, University of Toronto. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you can contact her at (416) 978-5900 or stephanie.begun@utoronto.ca.

Sponsor/funding:

This study is funded by Health Canada.

Purpose of research and invitation to participate:

The purpose of this study is to address the abortion information, access, and appropriate care needs of under-served populations, including youth, in Canada. With mentorship and training support from Dr. Stephanie Begun, our team of six youth researchers will engage healthcare and other service providers in youth-led focus groups, in an effort to define and further develop appropriate and affirming approaches and tools that healthcare and other service providers may use to optimally meet the needs of people seeking abortion information and care. These conversations will also allow for tools and supports to be further developed for youth and other equity-deserving groups to use as they seek abortion information and care, including resources that help people self-advocate regarding their own needs and preferences when seeking abortion care.

By conducting this research, we are creating opportunities for Youth Wellness Lab youth researchers (ages 29 and under, from a broad range of intersectional diversities, lived experiences, and identities) to lead conversations and engage professionals from fields of midwifery, nursing, social work, family medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, and pharmacy in research. This research will explore how professionals' approaches to providing information, access, and appropriate abortion care may be further advanced through questions and priorities identified specifically by youth. Resources can then be developed by youth researchers and shared back with professional stakeholder groups for each to consider integrating into their practice efforts. Findings from this youth-led research can also help to develop self-advocacy tools for youth and other equity-seeking groups to use as they seek abortion information and care.

In agreeing to participate in this research, you are indicating that you will participate in a focus group with others from your profession or field, to discuss challenges, opportunities, and approaches to providing abortion information and care in Canada.

Eligibility (Who Can Participate):

To participate in this study, you must be an active practitioner-professional in one of the following fields: Midwifery; Nursing; Social Work; Family Medicine; Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Pharmacy.

Procedures (What to Expect):

If you consent to participate in the study, you will be asked to participate in one focus group (held virtually, online through Zoom, for approximately 60-90 minutes), with other practitioner-professionals from your field and facilitated by youth researchers from the Youth Wellness Lab. During this focus group, you will be asked questions about challenges and opportunities that you see in providing abortion information and care, what is working well in the field, and what could be different or improved in training, approaches to providing, and access to abortion care. Your responses will be confidential and secure. Only Dr. Stephanie Begun and her research team will have access to your responses, and your answers will not be linked to your name or identifying information in any way.

Voluntary Participation & Early Withdrawal:

Your participation is purely voluntary, and you will not receive compensation for participating in this focus group. You may withdraw consent to use the data that you have provided for research purposes up until 3 months after all data have been collected for this entire study, the point at which data analysis of results from the study will begin (December 31, 2023). Your decision to participate in this study or not will have no bearing on your current or future relationship with Youth Wellness Lab or the University of Toronto.

Potential Benefits:

There will be no direct benefits for you. However, your participation in this research has the potential to positively impact individuals' experiences while seeking abortion information and care in Canada.

Potential Risks:

There are no foreseeable risks or harms associated with your participation in this evaluation research, although there may be some questions that may inadvertently cause some discomfort. To mitigate discomfort, we remind you that: 1) this study is voluntary, and you have a right to share only what you feel comfortable disclosing in the focus group setting; 2) participants who consent to participate are able to withdraw at any time (you are able to withdraw your data up until when data analysis will begin, December 31, 2023), and 3) if emotional support is needed, we will make appropriate referrals in your local community for support.

Privacy & confidentiality:

Any information about your involvement or participation in this study will remain confidential and data will be treated with the utmost of confidentiality. All recordings deleted/destroyed after they have been transcribed and with all identifying information removed. All electronic data (i.e., de-identified transcripts) will be destroyed five years after the

completion of the study. These electronic data will be deleted, and trash emptied on the computer so there are no traces of the data. Consent forms for all data collected will be stored electronically and be placed on a secure password protected computer and password protected research drive (University of Toronto Office 365 drive) that requires special permissions to be able to have access. Access to computers and electronic drives will be secured by use of specific passwords known only to Dr. Begun and University of Toronto Youth Wellness Lab Research Assistants who comprise this research team, consistent with U of T's data security and encryption standards. During dissemination, confidentiality will be protected because there will be no identifying information and all participants will be identified by a number. Confidentiality can only be guaranteed to the extent permitted by law. For example, if you disclose that you are at risk of harming yourself and/or others, the researchers are obligated to report this to the appropriate parties (e.g., emergency services) in order to maintain safety. Similarly, if you disclose that a child under the age of 16 is experiencing current or ongoing abuse, the researchers will have a legal duty to report this to proper authorities, such as child protective services.

Our focus group conversations will happen virtually. All virtual interactions with our research team will occur via Zoom. Although we cannot 100% guarantee your privacy with regard to any virtual research activities that may occur in this study via Zoom, Zoom is a communication and collaboration platform that can be used to conduct virtual interviews. For any research activity that occurs on Zoom, you will be given a unique and password-protected link for joining the interview. Though we cannot fully guarantee privacy and confidentiality with regard to other focus group participants hearing and remembering your specific responses to questions, we will mention and encourage all participants, at several points during the focus group, that our hope and intent of hosting these conversations is to do so with utmost respect for and privacy granted with regard to everyone's responses, and that we are convening with a goal of improving experiences and outcomes for people seeking abortion information and care across Canada.

Publication of research findings:

Research findings from this study may be published in scientific or professional journals or presented at conferences, webinars or community forums. All data will be stripped of any identifying characteristics. While participant quotations may be used from qualitative data, we will not use any identifying information.

Contact person:

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Ethics Review Office at the University of Toronto, by telephone at 416-946-3273 or by email at ethics.review@utoronto.ca

Dissemination of findings:

You may request a copy of any final reports or publications from the Principal Investigator.

Copy of informed consent for participant:

- You are being given a copy of this informed consent to keep for your own records

Consent:

- I understand that this is focus group study, which means I will be asked questions in a group-based setting and with other colleagues and peers from my specific profession or discipline.
- I understand that by consenting to participate in this study, I will be asked questions in a focus group conversation, which will be audio recorded and transcribed, and that these data will be used for the study.
- I understand that I can voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time and that I have until December 31, 2023 to participate and to withdraw my consent to have my data used as part of the study.
- I understand that the information used in the research is confidential and will not be shared with anyone in an identifying manner.
- I have been assured that no information will be released or printed that would disclose my personal identity

By signing (or typing my name to indicate my signature), below, I give my consent to participate in the study and know that I can withdraw this consent until December 31, 2023, and that there is no penalty for withdrawing my consent.

Consent provided to participate in the study:

Consent to be audio recorded:

Signature of Investigator/Research Assistant

Name of Researcher

Signature of Researcher

Date