



**IMPROVING CASE FORMULATION COMPETENCY IN COGNITIVE  
BEHAVIOUR THERAPISTS**

**INFORMATION SHEET : GROUP B**

Dear

I would like to encourage your participation in my PhD project, the details of which are summarized below. The PhD thesis, aims to investigate ways in which the case formulation skills of clinicians can be developed and improved. A case formulation is a theory about how psychological problems develop and are maintained. A useful case formulation guides treatment, signals potential difficulties in therapy and helps organize complex clinical data in a way that makes sense to both the clinician and client or patient. Case formulation is considered to be a cornerstone clinical skill and an important part of practicing as a "scientist practitioner". It is hoped that your participation in this study will go some way to increasing the understanding of what might facilitate the development of expertise in this area, particularly as far as the training of psychotherapists is concerned.

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**PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT**

Participants will be mental health practitioners who identify their clinical practice as being guided by the Cognitive Behaviour Therapy model.

Participants will be recruited directly by the researcher.

## **PROJECT PROCEDURES**

Participants will be randomly assigned to two groups , group A and group B.

The data collected from group B will be written case formulations based on the case vignettes provided .

The data will be stored and supervised by the principal researcher who is a Massey University staff member. The confidentiality of the data collected will be preserved. Whilst the project is in progress the data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the principal researcher's office at Massey University, Albany, Auckland. The building is protected by the Massey University security system which provides 24-hour surveillance. The building is equipped with an alarm. As is customary the data will be stored in the manner described above for the recommended period of five years. The principal researcher, according to the wishes of the participants will then dispose of the data.

## **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT**

Participants will be asked to provide written conceptual formulations, after reading transcripts of clinical case vignettes. There will be four transcripts. There will be a three week time period between the completion of vignette 1 and 2; and vignette 3 and 4. The identity of the participant will be protected. The case formulations will then be coded for content and quality. The research assistants coding the case formulations will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Three months after the completion of the project participants will be asked to complete one further written formulation based on a clinical vignette as a follow up. The total time involved in the completion of all these tasks will be two and a half hours.

When the project has been completed and the results have been analyzed a summary of the results and hypothesized implications of the study will be made available to the all participants.

## **PARTICIPANT RIGHTS**

### **You have the right to:**

- Decline to participate
- Decline to answer any particular question
- Withdraw from the study at any time
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- Be given access to a summary of the findings when the project is completed

## **SUPPORT PROCESSES**

It is not anticipated that this project will pose a risk for the participants.

## **PROJECT CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the project described above please contact:



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### **COMMITTEE APPROVAL STATEMENT**

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Application 04/58. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Palmerston North, telephone 06 350 5249, email [humanethicsspn@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethicsspn@massey.ac.nz)