Information Sheet

Title of Research Study: COVID-19 and Precarious Employment (COPE)

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Introduction and Purpose of this Study: You are being asked to consider participating in this research study. The overall purpose of the project is to understand how non-standard employment arrangements (for example temporary employment, self-employment, gig-work, etc.) and precarious employment arrangements affect the well-being of workers and their families. We also seek to understand how of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted those with precarious work conditions and how government or workplace policies do or do not support these workers and how they can be improved.

To do so, we seek to explore how workers' experience the connections between their employment arrangement and the well-being of both themselves and that of their families, and the strategies that might be used to cope or deal with these experiences. Up to 120 interviews will be conducted across Ontario.

Methods: We are asking you to participate in an interview either in-person or via Zoom (a video conferencing service that can be accessed online or by phone). We will ask you questions about your employment arrangements, government and workplace policies and practices that may support you, and your perceptions of how work may influence your and family's well-being. We will also ask if you experienced changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the accuracy of our findings, the interview will be audio recorded for later transcription by an independent service provider and review by the research team. You cannot participate in this study if you do not consent to audio recording. All audio recordings will be deleted from the recording device once they have been securely stored on our project drive. All audio recordings will be destroyed from the project drive once they have been transcribed and verified for accuracy. In addition to audio recording the interviews, we will be taking written notes to capture responses during the interviews. We anticipate the interviews to last up to 90 minutes. If you agree to participate in this research study, your verbal consent will be obtained and documented by the interviewer.

Potential Risks of Participation: We know of no known risks to you if you participate in this survey. The risks of participating are the same as discussing a stressful life event. We want to be sensitive to your needs and remind you that you are free to skip any question(s) you are not comfortable answering. However, remembering and discussing a traumatic event may result in a negative reaction or temporary feelings of distress. Should you experience any distress during the interview, please inform the interviewer. We will pause or stop the interview and provide you with a resource sheet and connect you directly with one of the services listed on this sheet.

Potential Benefits of Participation: You will not directly benefit from participation in this research study. Participation in the in-depth interview will help the researchers and policy makers gain a better understanding of the pandemic has impacted those with precarious work conditions and how government or workplace policies do or do not support these workers and how they can be improved.

Honoraria: Following the completion of this interview, as a thank you for your participation, our research team would like to provide you with a $60 gift card. This will be provided after we have concluded the interview. As we will be conducting the interviews virtually, we will provide you with an online gift card by email.

Accessing Study Results: Results of this study may be presented at a conference or published in an academic journal. If you would like a copy of the results of the study, you can contact the study investigator. We expect that the results of the study will be available starting in Winter 2023.

An emerging practice in research is to make research data from publicly funded studies available for others to use once they have been stripped of any identifying information. If this is requested of us, we will provide the journal the data that is grouped with others and no single individual will be able to be identified this way. Your name nor any other identifying information would never be shared with anyone but the study team.

If you would like a copy of published copies of the study results, please reach out to a member of the research team listed on this sheet.

Confidentiality: Every effort will be made to ensure and maintain confidentiality of the information that is collected from you during this research study. We implement several strategies to protect confidentiality.

We will separate your name from your interview information when we store your data. To further protect your confidentiality we will assign you a code and store your data securely using this code. Your name will be kept in a separate linking log which links your names with interview code. The linking will be password protected and stored on the research team's shared secure computer drive which is kept behind multiple locked doors. Only members of the research team will have access. Your name will not leave Canada or be shared with anyone outside the Canadian research team. Responsible for your personal data is Dr. Patricia O'Campo, the Principal Investigator of this study. Paper data will be stored in locked files at our office at MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, St. Michael's Hospital at Unity Health Toronto. Electronic data will be stored in a secure server. Both hard-copies and electronic data will be stored for a period of 5 years after the completion of the study.

We will disclose information with identifiers only with your permission or as required by law.

Participation and Withdrawal

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate in this study, or leave this study at any time. If you decide to participate in this study you can change your mind without giving a reason, at any time, and you may decline to answer any questions asked in the interview.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, the study team will ask you whether you would like to stop data collection moving forward, but have the responses you already provided still be part of the study or withdraw from the study completely including all your responses you provided previously. If you withdraw from the interview before completing it, you will not receive the honoraria. Your participation in this study will not impact your current or future employment.

Research Ethics Board Contact: If you have any questions as a research participant you may contact Dr. David Mazer, Chair of the Providence, St. Joseph's and St. Michael's Healthcare Research Ethics Board at 416-864-6060, extension 42557.

Study Contacts: If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Patricia O'Campo at patricia.ocampo@unityhealth.to or Pearl Buhariwala at pearl.buhariwala@unityhealth.to or Phone: 416-864-6060 x 77358