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Mature Workers in Organisations

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about the experiences and needs of mature and maturing workers.

Australia and other developed nations around the world are experiencing unprecedented population growth among mature-aged adults. This trend towards an ageing population is expected to continue for decades and will affect many aspects of society, including work. Employers recognise that their labour pool is ageing, and are interested in understanding how the work environment (e.g. job design, workplace policies) can be shaped to not only attract, but also retain, an ageing workforce. Results from this study will shed light on current work practices and will identify opportunities for employers interested in supporting their workers.

You have been invited to participate in this study because we are looking for adults (age 18 or older) who are currently working. We are seeking to interview approximately 30 individuals in each participating organisation, in order to learn about their experiences and perceptions within their workplace. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the study. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by Professor Marian Baird, Professor of Gender and Employment Relations, Head of Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, University of Sydney

This research project is funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) through the Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research (project number CE170100005).

(3) What will the study involve for me?

You will be asked to take part in an interview or focus group that asks about your experiences and perceptions within the workplace. There are four main topics we wish to talk to you about:

1. Your personal experience as an employee at your organisation.
2. Your perception of how your organisation supports the mature workforce and what they can do better;
3. Your experience working with people of different ages at your organisation; and
4. What you are doing personally to manage your career (career planning, phased retirement, flexi-work).

The interview or focus group will take place at a mutually convenient location, by phone, or by video conferencing, as agreed. We will make a digital audio recording of our discussion so we can concentrate on what you have to say and not be distracted by taking notes.

There will be no cost to you for taking part in this research and you will not be paid for taking part.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

An interview will take approximately 30-40 minutes. A focus group will take approximately 60-90 minutes.

(5) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney, or with your organisation and your colleagues.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw at any time. You can do this by contacting our research team at the phone number/email address provided at the end of this Information Sheet and ask to be withdrawn from the study.

You are free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be erased and the information you have provided will not be included in

the study results. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview.

If you take part in a focus group, you are free to stop participating at any stage or to refuse to answer any of the questions. However, it will not be possible to withdraw your individual comments from our records once the group has started, as it is a group discussion.

(6) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

(7) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

We cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefits from being in the study. However, we hope the results of this research will allow us to better understand the relationships between work design, organisational policies, and balancing work and care responsibilities.

(8) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

After the interview/focus group we will make a full written copy of the audio recording. A transcription service may be used to make this written copy.

The results of this research will be reported to participating organisations through a summary of key themes that have arisen across all interviews. Excerpts from the interviews may be shared with your organisation to illustrate the main themes uncovered in the interviews. All excerpts will be de-identified by removing your name as well as any other identifiable information such as exact job role, department etc. Your organisation will not have access to your raw interview recordings or transcripts.

The information we collect may also be presented at conferences or published in professional journals. You will not be identified in any results that are published or presented.

We will collect data that can identify you, but will then remove identifying information on any data or sample and replace it with a code when we analyse the data. Only the research team have access to the code to match your name or position if it is necessary to do so. Any information we collect will be treated as confidential and used only in this project unless otherwise specified. The only anticipated limit to this confidentiality is if during the interview we uncover illegal activity, in which case we are mandated to report this to the relevant authority. The following people will have access to the information we collect in this research: the research team and, in the event of an audit or investigation, staff from the Human Ethics Department of University of Sydney.

The information we collect in this study will be kept in hard copy and electronic form under secure conditions at the University of Sydney for 7 years and then it will be destroyed. All electronic data will be stored on the servers of the University of Sydney and password-protected and any hard copy data will be locked in storage.

You will not have access your personal information from this study once it has been collected.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise.

Your information will be stored securely and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

(9) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(10) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Professor Marian Baird will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Professor Marian Baird at the University of Sydney email marian.baird@sydney.edu.au or phone +61 2 9351 6439.

(11) Will I be told the results of the study?

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking the relevant box on the consent form. This feedback will be in the form of a one page lay summary. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

(12) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney (HREC 2020/102). As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

This information sheet is for you to keep