

A few months ago you helped us with *Understanding Society*. Thank you very much for taking part in the interview.

Understanding Society is the largest and most ambitious study of its kind in the world. It is carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research organisation in London. The study is commissioned by the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex.

To help us build up a detailed picture of life in the UK and how it's changing, we need to get a more detailed understanding about people's health. We think it is important to get an accurate measure of your health, and the health of people like you. To enable this to be done in as safe a way as possible, we would like to arrange for a nurse to visit your household to take some measures that the study cannot get in any other way. The information is used to look at:

- changes in health over time
- how health affects other parts of life
- how the health of family members affects each other
- health patterns across the country

Each nurse visit is important to us as the nurses have some questions to ask and, if you agree, they may take some measurements such as height, weight, grip strength and blood pressure. In the next week or so a National Centre for Social Research interviewer will telephone you and will be able to explain more about this part of the study. If you agree, one of our nurses will then contact you to arrange an appointment. We use registered nurses who all carry an identity card with a photograph. If you happen to be busy when the nurse calls, they will be happy to call back at a more convenient time.

We hope you will be willing to help. We rely on the goodwill and voluntary co-operation of those who are selected to take part to make the study a success. It is important that we speak to as many of those people selected as possible so we get a more accurate picture of the health of people in the UK. If you do take part, we will send you a £10 high street voucher as a token of our appreciation.

On the back of this letter we have answered some of the questions you may have. If you would like to talk to someone about the study, please phone NatCen on freephone 0800 652 0401.

Thank you for your help.

Neil Barton
Project Co-ordinator
National Centre for Social Research

Dr. Ian Forde
Understanding Society Survey Doctor



What will happen to any information I give?

The information collected is used for statistical and research purposes only and will be dealt with according to the principles of the 1998 Data Protection Act. The results of the study will never include any names or addresses. We take great care to protect the confidentiality of all information and test results.

Everything you say/report is confidential unless you tell us something that indicates that you or someone else is at risk of harm, or about illegal activity which could harm the public.



Who is carrying out the study?

Researchers at the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex are running *Understanding Society* together with the National Centre for Social Research, with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council.

The National Centre for Social Research was set up in 1969 and is a registered charity (Registered Charity No. 1091768). ISER and NatCen are independent of all government departments and political parties.



What is the Economic and Social Research Council?

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is the UK's leading agency for research funding and training in economic and social sciences. They are an independent organisation, established by Royal Charter. They receive most of their funding from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The ESRC funds over 2,500 researchers and 2,000 postgraduate students in academic institutions and policy research institutes throughout the UK.



Contact number

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