



Participant Information Leaflet



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What is NICOLA?

The **N**orthern Ireland **C**ohort for the **L**ongitudinal Study of **A**geing (NICOLA) is the largest public health study in Northern Ireland talking to people from 50 years old right up to 100 years and beyond.

NICOLA explores the health, lifestyles and financial situation of people as they grow older.

- The population aged over 50 is the most rapidly growing group in Northern Ireland.
- In just over 10 years there will be more over 65's than under 18's
- **8504 people** aged 50 and over took part in the first interviews in NICOLA wave 1

What is NICOLA about?

NICOLA is a major research study run by Queen's University Belfast that explores the lives of people aged 50 and over.

The interview covers topics such as health, housing, finances, work, retirement and quality of life.

The data gathered will be compared with similar research studies in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and will also help inform government policy and shape public services in years to come.

The information that YOU provide can help the government ensure that the healthcare system and pension system are meeting people's needs. It also gives researchers the opportunity to understand what influences successful ageing and what we can do to improve health.

Why me and why am I important?

You may have helped us previously with the study and for this we are most grateful and we hope you can continue to help us again. Alternatively this may be the first time we have approached you to take part.



*Everybody has a contribution to make by answering the questions. Your answers are important, even if you feel that none of this applies to you, it will help build a picture of people aged 50 and over living in Northern Ireland. **Whatever your situation your feedback is important to us.***

Your participation in NICOLA is entirely voluntary although we do hope you take part. Signing the consent form confirms your willingness to take part. You may choose to skip any questions you are uncomfortable with.

If you have any questions ask the interviewer to explain more.

Even if you do consent to participate you are free to withdraw at any time. This can be done at the time of the home interview or by contacting the NICOLA office (details on page 4)

We guard your privacy – storage of data

NICOLA has put a number of rigorous procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of our participants and ALL information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The interviewers' laptop is encrypted. Your answers are scrambled and no unauthorised person could understand them.

Your name and address will only be known by the core NICOLA team for contact purposes.

The information collected is for research purposes and NO identifiable data will be passed to either researcher, government bodies or otherwise. Study results will NEVER be in a form that can reveal your identity or household identity.

Who is carrying out the interviews?

Interviewers from IPSOS MORI will carry out the home interview on behalf of Queen's University Belfast.

The interview will be completed in your own home at a time *that suits you*.

The interviewer will collect information on your living arrangements, children, education, physical and mental health, employment, lifelong learning, income, plans for retirement, and care and social support. They record this information using an encrypted computer. The interview takes approximately 90 minutes to complete.

The NICOLA study team will also post you a short written questionnaire to complete. This can be returned in the stamped addressed envelope provided.



NICOLA study

Centre for Public Health

Queens University Belfast

Institute of Clinical Sciences, Block B

Grosvenor Road

BELFAST

BT12 6BJ

Who can I contact?

If you require any further information, have any questions or want to express any concerns please don't hesitate to contact us.



028 90978921



NICOLA@qub.ac.uk

Thank you

As a thank you for taking part in this interview we will provide you with a **£15 e-voucher** issued by Queen's University Belfast. You will receive this in the post approximately 6 weeks after you complete the interview.