LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Testing an internet-based safety decision aid for women experiencing intimate partner violence (Phase 2)

"I CAN Plan 4 Safety Study - Phase 2"

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Name of Sponsor:
This research project is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Conflict of Interest:
None to declare.

Letter of Information

Introduction:
We invite you to take part in a research study to test a new online tool for women who are experiencing abuse. The tool is called 'I CAN plan 4 safety". A group of 450 Canadian women from Ontario, British Columbia, and New Brunswick will take part. This letter gives you information to help you decide if you want to take part in this study.

Background:
Safety planning is an important way to reduce the impacts of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), but fewer than 1 in 5 Canadian women access support from violence services to assist them in safety planning.

Purpose of the Study:
The purpose of this study is to learn whether using an online tool affects the safety and health of women who are experiencing abuse from a partner or ex-partner.

Who is Eligible to Take Part?
You are can take part if you:

- Are an adult woman, 19 years of age or older
- Are fluent in English
- Live in Ontario, British Columbia, or New Brunswick
- Are experiencing violence/abuse from a current or former partner
- Are comfortable using a computer and the internet
- Have access to a safe computer with internet
- Have an email address that is safe (e.g. your ex/partner can't access)

What Taking Part Means:
If you agree to take part, you will be randomly assigned (like flipping a coin) to complete one of two online safety tools. Both tools provide information about risks, ways to improve safety, and services and resources for women experiencing violence. One tool provides general information; the other provides personalized feedback based on your risks and priorities for safety.

You will complete the online tool at your own pace on a confidential study website. This takes about one hour. You will be asked to complete the tool 4 times: now and 3, 6 and 12 months later. You will be emailed the website address, a user name and a password to access the tool. You can access the online tool 24 hours a day, 7 days a week over the 12 months of the study.

When you complete the tool, you will be asked questions about your health and safety for you and your family. It also includes questions about violence you may have experienced and what you have done to stay safe. You can call or email a research assistant to ask questions if you need help with the tool. We will do our best to answer your questions quickly (usually within 48 hours).

We will also ask you for safe contact information. We will remind you when it is time to complete the online tool again. We will also contact you once or twice between your 4 sessions to make sure we have your contact information.

If you complete the online tool which offers general information, you will be given a chance to access the personalized tool at the end of the study if you wish.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal from Study:
Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer specific questions. However, in the online tool, the answers to some questions, such as the province where you live, are needed for the tool to work correctly. If you prefer not to answer these questions, you will not be able to complete the study. You may decide not to be in this study. At any time, you may leave the study, or ask to have your information removed. By taking part in this research study, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

Possible Risks and Harms*:*
The risks of taking part in this study are small. You may become upset if some questions make you think of painful experiences of abuse. Take a break if you feel upset, and return to the tool

later. In the tool, you will find information about who you can call for support. You can also call a research assistant for more information about community resources.
Your partner might become angry if that person learns that you are taking part in this study. We will try not to increase your danger. We will only contact you in the ways that you tell us are safe. We will not tell anyone else who answers the phone who we are or why we are calling.

Possible Benefits:
You may not benefit from this study. The tool may make you more aware of actions you can take to be safe and services that can help you. You can use the safety and resource information anytime. What we learn in this study may help develop ways to support women who are experiencing abuse.

Confidentiality of the Information You Provide:
The information you tell us will be kept confidential. However, if you tell us that you are at risk of harming yourself or others, by law we must share this information. If we are going to share this information, we will talk to you first.

If you take part, you will be given a study ID number. Your answers to questions in the online tool will be saved using this ID number on a secure password protected server. Your name or other identifying information will be saved on a different secure server at the University of Western Ontario, separate from your answers to the online tool.

All study information will be stored in a locked cabinet at The University of Western Ontario and/or in secure computer files. Only the research team will have access to these files. All study records will be kept for at least 5 years. After that time, computer files may be deleted and paper files shredded.

Representatives of the University of Western Ontario Health Sciences Research Ethics Board may look at the study records or access your research information to make sure the study has followed proper laws and guidelines.

What we learn in this study will be shared in research journals, magazines, newspapers, public talks and on the study website. If you are interested, please go to the study website for updates. No names will be used in sharing the findings.

Costs and Compensation:
There is no cost to taking part in this study. To thank you for your time, we will give you a gift card (e.g. Walmart, Tim Horton's, Shopper's Drug Mart) each time you complete the online tool. The first gift card is for $20. The amount increases each time you complete the tool ($30 for session 2, $40 for session 3, and $50 for session 4, for a total of $140). At the start of the tool, you will be asked to choose the type of gift card you would like to receive. We will mail this gift card to the safe mailing address you provide. If you stop taking part in the study, you can keep the gift cards that you have been sent.

Questions about the Study:
If you have questions about the study, please call Joanne Hammerton, Research Manager. Her phone number is 519-661-2111, extension 81247. You may also contact Dr. Marilyn Ford-Gilboe, the Principal Investigator for this study at 519-661-2111, extension 86603.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics at 519-661-3036, email: ethics@uwo.ca.

Consent:
If you agree to take part in this study, please tell me. Then agree again when you first log onto the tool.

Consent Form

Project Title: Testing an internet-based safety decision aid for women experiencing intimate partner violence (Phase 2): "I CAN Plan 4 Safety Study – Phase 2"

Investigator's Name: Dr. Marilyn Ford-Gilboe

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

If you decide to participate in the study and then change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any time with no consequence.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics at 519-661-3036, email: ethics@uwo.ca.

By saying I agree, you agree to participate in the study described above.

Participant's Consent: Yes / No

Participant's Name (Please Print): Date:

_____ _____

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (Please Print): Signature:

_____ _____

Version Date: June 25, 2014