We would be grateful for your help with the National Study of Health and Wellbeing.

Dear Sir or Madam

Since 1993 the National Study of Health and Wellbeing has been finding out how everyday stresses and strains – like lack of sleep or caring for others - affect our lives. By taking part you can help the NHS, policy makers and charities make the right decisions about important issues like health, social care and employment.

What’s next?
One of our interviewers will call at your house in the next week or so to explain more about the study and ask for your help. So you know who they are, they all carry a photo ID.

Why am I important?
We have chosen your address at random to make sure we get a representative picture of everyone in England. Your address cannot be replaced by anyone else’s.

Why should I take part?
£15
Taking part is voluntary. By speaking to us, you will be helping to give a clearer understanding of the experiences and needs of people in England. As a token of our appreciation, we will give everyone taking part a £15 gift card that can be spent online and in shops.

We look forward to speaking to you soon.

Neil Barton
Project Coordinator
NatCen Social Research

We chose your address at random from the Postcode Address File. This file is held by the Post Office and is available to the public.

Who do you want to interview?
We will interview around 10,000 adults across England. We will randomly select one person aged 16 or over at your address to take part.

What’s involved?
An experienced interviewer will call at your home and carry out an interview using a laptop computer. The interview can be arranged for a time that suits you.

What will happen to any information I give?
We will treat the information you give in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998. The results collected are used for research purposes only and no one looking at the findings will be able to identify you in any way.

Where can I spend my voucher?
Your voucher is a £15 gift card which you can spend online or at a range of high street shops, such as Boots, Argos and Debenhams.

What has the study already found out?
The first study in this series investigating England’s wellbeing was completed over 20 years ago. Since then we’ve found out key information about the nation’s health and wellbeing including the impact of ageing, caring for others, lack of sleep and stress at work.

Where can I find out more?
Your interviewer will be able to tell you more, but you can also visit www.natcen.ac.uk/healthandwellbeing or phone us free on 0800 652 0201. Thank you for taking part.
What is the study about?
Since 1993, the National Study of Health and Wellbeing has been finding out how everyday stresses, strains and joys affect our lives.

How did you sleep yesterday? Did you have a good week at work or college? Do you look after other people? By asking questions like these we can improve understanding of how such experiences can impact on our health and wellbeing.

We are going to interview around 10,000 adults aged 16 and over across England and this information will inform local and national planning and improve the services you use.

You are important
The study is mapping the nation’s health and wellbeing. It’s really important that we talk to all kinds of people, so that our work represents everyone in England. Whatever your situation, your experiences are important to us.

Completing the bigger picture
Over the years, around 60,000 people have taken part in this research programme. The more people who take part, the clearer picture we’ll get of the nation’s health and wellbeing.

By taking part you will help the NHS, policy makers and charities make the right decisions about important issues like health, social care and employment.

Who is carrying out the research?
NatCen Social Research is carrying out the study alongside the University of Leicester. We are conducting the study on behalf of the Health and Social Care Information Centre, with funding from the Department of Health and some local authorities.

NatCen have been carrying out high quality social research for 40 years. We are a non-profit organisation, independent of all government departments and political parties.

For more information
Your interviewer will be able to explain more or alternatively call us free on 0800 652 0201 or visit our website:
www.natcen.ac.uk/healthandwellbeing

Our promises to you
We respect your wishes
Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don’t want to.

We answer your questions
Your interviewer will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study.

We ensure your safety
All our interviewers carry photographic ID cards and have been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

We guard your privacy
We will treat information you give in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act. The results collected will be used for research purposes only.

The National Study of Health and Wellbeing makes a difference
This study has been investigating England’s wellbeing for over 20 years. Here is a snapshot of some of the things we’ve found out.

Happiness across the years
There has been a view that people’s happiness reduces as they get older. Results from this study set the story straight – happiness doesn’t decline with age. What matters for some is having friends or family around, and regular contact with others.

Getting enough sleep?
Many of us have trouble sleeping. We uncovered that since the early 1990s more and more of us are having trouble sleeping. Struggling to get enough sleep over a long period of time can harm our mental health. It’s important we keep tracking this, so researchers can understand what’s causing our sleepless nights.

All in a day’s work
It’s not just having a job that helps people feel positive – the job itself also matters. We found that things like job security, independence and variety at work make a real difference to people’s mental health and wellbeing.

The impact of caring
We know that people of all ages deal with the responsibility of caring for others, providing unpaid help to family and friends who are ill or frail. Our research has shown that those who care for others often have unmet needs themselves and their own wellbeing can suffer. Changes to government policy now mean that carers have the right to apply for flexible working hours.

National Study of Health and Wellbeing
Survey leaflet
Consent to data linkage

National Study of Health and Wellbeing
LINKING YOUR ANSWERS TO OTHER HEALTH INFORMATION

What does it mean to link your answers with other health information?
Health information about you is held securely by different government organisations such as the Health and Social Care Information Centre and the Department of Health.
This is information about things related to your health such as hospital admissions or health conditions you may have.
We would like to ask your consent to link your survey answers with this health information.

Why do we want to link your answers with other health information?
By linking this information the study is more valuable as we can look at how a person's lifestyle can have an impact on their future health and wellbeing. For example, a study by Cancer Research UK linked information held by the Department of Health to investigate the lifetime risk of cancer in different ethnic groups. A different study follows women that had IVF treatment to help them have children, to see if this has any impact on future risk of cancer or mortality.

Your linked answers would only be used for research purposes under restricted access arrangements. This ensures that the information is used responsibly and safely. The information will not identify you and it cannot be used by anyone treating you as a patient.

How do we link your answers with other health information?
We give all your securely stored survey answers a random serial number, and then remove all the information that could identify you (e.g. your name, address, contact details). This means your survey answers are confidential and you cannot be identified from them.
To link your anonymised answers to the health information held by government organisations we need to find out your NHS number. To do this we securely send your name, address and date of birth (without your survey answers) to the NHS Central Register. This register is run by a government organisation called the Health and Social Care Information Centre. They put a flag on the register that you've taken part in the study and securely send us your NHS number.
We then use your NHS number to link your anonymous survey answers to the health information stored by government departments. Names, addresses or dates of birth are never included with your survey answers or in results and no individual can be identified from them.
If you agree to share your anonymous survey answers so they can be linked with other information, any research using them is required by law to protect your confidentiality.

We need your written permission to link your survey answers with:
- Your health and treatment information stored securely by the Health and Social Care Information Centre and other central NHS bodies. This includes any visits to hospital, information about specific medical conditions such as cancer, and details about when people pass away, the date and cause of their death.

You do not have to give your consent for us to collect this information if you do not want to. You can cancel your consent at any time by writing to Neil Barton, NatCen Social Research, 35 Northampton Square, London EC1V 0AX.

I have read or heard this information and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

If you give permission for us to collect this health information please sign below.

[Signature]
[Name]
[Date]

Respondent signature
Respondent name
Date

Interviewer signature
Interviewer name
Date

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[Signature]
[Name]
[Date]

Respondent signature
Respondent name
Date

Interviewer signature
Interviewer name
Date
There may be times in everyone’s life when they feel miserable and depressed. At such times they might feel that they cannot cope. When people feel like this it is important that they can talk to someone and seek help.

If you should feel like this, or if you are concerned for someone else, here are some contacts which might be useful.

## Local Help

### Your GP
They will be able to provide help and advice. Your GP can also provide access to appropriate specialist services and local organisations.

### Call 111
You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it’s not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

### Local organisations
They provide a range of services including support groups, help lines and information. Details can be obtained from your GP, your local library, or the internet.

### Citizens Advice Bureau
Helps people resolve their legal money & other problems providing them with free information and advice. [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## National Help

### The Samaritans
The Samaritans provide a confidential service for people in despair and who feel suicidal. 0845 790 9090  [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

### SANE
Provides information and support to anyone affected by mental illness. 0845 767 8000  [www.sane.co.uk](http://www.sane.co.uk)

### Maytree Respite Centre
For those in a suicidal crisis, Maytree offers short-term accommodation with befriending in a confidential, supportive and non-medical environment. 0207 263 7070  [www.maytree.org.uk](http://www.maytree.org.uk)

### Supportline
Confidential telephone helpline offering emotional support to any individual on any issue. 0170 8765 200  [www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)

### National Domestic Violence Helpline
Provides information service and access to 24-hour emergency refuge accommodation. 0808 2000 247

### Cruse Bereavement Care
Offers help, including a free counselling service, for bereaved people whatever their age, nationality or beliefs. 0844 477 9400  [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

### Talk to Frank
Confidential advice and information for those who are concerned, or have questions about drugs. 0300 123 6600  [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

### Alcoholics Anonymous
If you need help with a drinking problem. 0845 769 7555  [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

### Beat
Provides helplines, self-help groups and online support to anyone affected by eating disorders. 0845 634 1414  [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)

### National Study of Health and Wellbeing

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