**Study title: Social care workers’ perspectives on qualifications and social care career pathways/progression**

**Participant information**

**What is the purpose of the study?**

This survey is being undertaken to gather social care workers’ views about qualifications and career development. The Social Care Council is interested to find out about your experiences of doing qualifications in health and social care, the reasons why social care workers do qualifications and what helps or doesn’t help workers to do qualifications. We also want to learn about social care workers’ views on opportunities for career progression. Your views or suggestions will help us with our work in planning the way forward, along with the social care sector.

**Why have I been chosen?**

All social care workers in Northern Ireland have been sent an email inviting them to complete the survey.

**What do I have to do?**

We would like you to complete this anonymous online survey- this means we do not know the identity of social care workers. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. The survey will be available for 2 weeks, so you have time to decide whether to participate. We will need you to provide consent in order to complete the survey.When you click on the link to access the survey (on Survey Monkey), you will be required to tick a box to indicate your understand what the survey is about, what you are being asked to do, and that you consent to complete the survey.

**Do I have to take part?**

Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. You don’t have to answer all the questions, but it would really help us if you do.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of this study will be used to inform social care workforce developments. We will use the results to help us understand social care workers’ experiences and views and consider this when doing our work.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

We cannot promise the study will benefit you personally. The results of this study have the potential to inform regional policy and workforce initiatives.

**How will my data be treated and will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

This is an anonymous survey. All data collected will be treated with the strictest of confidence, according to the principles outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR; 2018). All of the electronic data will be anonymous and stored on password-protected computers.

The materials generated from the study will be held for a period of 5 years, after which time it will be destroyed in line with the Council’s policy for storage and retention of data. General information may be made available upon Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, in accordance with FOI legislation.

We will act as the data controller, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly, as stipulated in GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

**If I agree to participate, what arrangements are in place to ensure that I am kept safe?**

This survey is about workplace events and is designed to protect you from emotional harm. However if you become upset while completing this survey we suggest that you stop doing the survey. You can withdraw entirely or resume participation at another time. Should you require additional support please talk to someone for support such as your supervisor, manager, occupational health, or if your employer uses external support services you can contact them. For example, if you work in the Trusts contact Workplaces 24/7 service telephone 0808 800 0002 or email support@carecallwellbeing.com.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

The Social Care Council is organising and funding this project. We have commissioned a researcher to do this work for us.

**What happens when the study ends?**

Once you have completed the survey, you will not be required to do anything further. If you have any questions or regarding the study once it is completed or if you are interested in finding out the outcome of the study, then please contact the researcher via the Social Care Council.

**Who do I contact for further information about the study?**

Thank you for taking the time to read and for considering taking part. If you have any questions you can find out more about this study by contacting the Social Care Council who will put you in contact with the researcher.