

Figure 1: Topic Guides for the 1st Participant Interviews

Topic Guide for Interview 1

- When you first were aware of COVID did you take any extra precautions?
 - When did you become aware?
 - At that time what did you understand to be a risk, where did you get your information on risk?
 - Was the information about risk clear for you to understand, were you confident about risk and precautions?
- Can you describe your experience of living with arthritis during this period (i.e. the period of lockdown)?
 - Consider physical, general health
 - Psychological (anxiety, depression)
 - Social (impact of social participation, impact on social interaction with family, friends, groups)
 - Occupational impact (ability to work, understanding from employers, financial impacts)
 - Describe what a typical day involved during lockdown and what differences are there now
- Can you think of any specific impact there has been on your arthritis?
 - Treatment and ability to engage with rheumatology
 - Coping with your arthritis (physically, mentally)
- Can you share what it has been like to try and manage your arthritis during this time?
 - Has the way you manage your arthritis changed if so how?
 - What have been the key challenges and the key benefits (if any)?
- Have you sought help for your arthritis, if so can you tell me about this?
 - Use of telephone/internet sources of support (is this new for you or have you used before)?
 - What have been the benefits and challenges of using remote contact?
 - Could things have been done differently or better?
- Can you describe whether your health needs have changed?
- Can you describe any contact you have had with the rheumatology service during the period of lockdown and since?
 - Consider remote consultations
 - Advice line (telephone and emails)
 - Community blood tests
 - Explore their perceptions of these, what was helpful/unhelpful, were they frequent enough, what was the quality like, could they have been better?
- Can you think of any support that would have been helpful for you to receive from the rheumatology team during this period?
 - What could have worked better?
- Have there been any advantages/unexpected benefits as a result of Covid-19?
 - For you and your arthritis
 - With the engagement with rheumatology
 - For your general health and wellbeing
- What are your thoughts about the future?
 - Do you think that Covid-19 will have a long lasting impact on your arthritis?
 - Do you think that you are better prepared now for something similar in the future?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?
 - For example the impact lockdown and shielding may have led to other people helping out more (friends, family, agencies), how did you feel about that?
- Is there anything that you thought I would ask about but haven't?

Figure 2: Topic Guides for the 2nd Participant Interviews

Topic Guide 2

- Since our last interview on (date of previous interview):
 - How, if any, has your arthritis changed since our last interview (consider increase in symptoms, impact on physical, psychological and social function)?
 - Has the way you have been managing your arthritis changed since we last spoke?
 - Some people we have talked to are working (e.g. in employment, or doing voluntary work), if that applies to you, can you tell me your experiences since the last interview?
- How did you feel during the period of national restrictions in November that were similar to the main lockdown earlier in the year?
 - How have your thoughts, feelings, and behaviour varied from those during the first lockdown period?
 - Can you describe any activities (behaviours) that you are engaging in now that you were not doing during lockdown?
 - What has been the wider impact on your family and friends?
 - Have you felt fearful about COVID-19 (if so, has this fear increased or decreased since the first lockdown and if so what has influenced this change)?
 - Have you felt vulnerable/at risk. If yes, can you explain why (and what actions you have taken to reduce your vulnerability/risk)? If no, can you explain why you don't feel vulnerable?
 - What measures are you using in lockdown to help keep yourself safe (e.g. mask wearing)? Are you still using these measures and how do you feel about using them?
 - The term 'clinically extremely vulnerable' has been used to describe people at high risk. What are your thoughts about this?
 - What effect has the media's reporting of the pandemic had on your behaviour?
- The next set of questions are about any consultations you have had for your arthritis or any other medical conditions.
 - If you have attended for an appointment have you noticed any measures that have been taken to try to reassure you and make you feel safe (if so what have these been)?
 - How effective do you feel the measures you have noticed have been at keeping you safe?
- Since our last interview have you had a consultation over the telephone or via a computer screen/video about your arthritis or other health conditions?
 - What worked well, what are the benefits to you?
 - What didn't work so well, for example some people like to have someone present at a consultation (e.g. partner, family, friend), is this something that is important to you (if so, why)?
 - How did/do feel about having the consultation on your own?
 - If you have had or were going to have a telephone or video consultation, would it be important to you that it was with a doctor or health professional that you know (if yes why, if no why)?
- What kind of information have you been accessing about your arthritis and what do you think about it?
 - Is the internet something that you (or a family member) have used to access information about your arthritis?
 - Has your use of the internet changed as a result of the pandemic?
 - Have you had to develop new IT skills to access information, if so what has this involved?
 - How challenging have these new skills been to develop?
 - Has there been any help from family members/friends to develop new skills?
 - Have you had to develop new skills in other areas during the pandemic (e.g. booking appointments online, accessing online exercise classes, video meetings with friends)?
- The UK Government has approved a vaccination programme throughout the UK.
 - Do you plan to have the vaccine? (Explore response).
 - Will having the vaccine change your behaviour? If yes, how?
 - Should people with RA be a priority for a vaccine?
 - Do you think the vaccine will be effective for you?
- Is there anything that we have not discussed that you would like to share about your experience?