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**Doctoral Thesis Project**  
**Ontario Health and Well-being Study during COVID-19**  
**Interviews with Ontarians**

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**Invitation to Participate:** I am invited to participate in this *Ontario Health and Well-being Study during COVID-19* research study conducted by Dina Idriss-Wheeler, in the context of a PhD Thesis under the supervision of Dr. Sanni Yaya.

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of the study is understand how COVID-19 lockdowns in Ontario (stay at home order by government) affected: (i) my experience of violence by my partner, (ii) how I accessed supports (my family, friends, community or health services) (iii) how I was feeling mentally and physical (overall health well-being) and (iv) what I think would have made it better to access supports I needed.

**Participation:** My participation will consist of one 45-60 minute online (Zoom) interview or focus group facilitated by Dina Idriss-Wheeler and/or a research team member. During the interview or focus group, I will be asked questions about myself (i.e., employment, education), experience of intimate partner violence before and during COVID-19 lockdowns, how COVID-19 affected my access to social supports (friends, family, services, shelters, healthcare), how I was feeling mentally and physically and what I think would have made it helpful to access necessary services. The session will be conducted online through videoconferencing (Zoom) and recorded only for transcription. I do not have to have my video on if I do not want to. The interview will be a one-on-one session with the principal researcher. If I choose a focus group, the session will be facilitated by the principal researcher with another research team member and include other participants (~6) who will also discuss their experience of intimate partner violence during COVID-19.

**Risks:** My participation in this study means that I discuss the sensitive topic of experience of intimate partner violence and this may cause me to feel emotional or mental distress. The researchers have said that every effort will be made to make risks less. This includes the option to refuse to answer a question, option to withdraw at any time in the study, my identity will not be revealed, my personal information will not be linked to my responses. I understand that there is a list of resources for health and well-being below for me to access:



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- Assaulted Women's Helpline via 1-888-388-2915 (24 hours a day) or their online chat via: <https://www.awhl.org/online-chat> 11am-8pm Monday-Friday EST
- Talk 4 Healing offers confidential support 24 hours a day in 14 Indigenous languages, French, and English via 1-855-554-HEAL.
- Femaide provides support 24 hours a day to Francophone survivors via 1-877-336-2433
- Find your closest violence against women service via [www.sheltersafe.ca](http://www.sheltersafe.ca)

**Benefits:** My participation in this study is beneficial as it may connect me with helpful resources that I did not know existed (i.e., shelters, legal, culturally specific organizations, counselling, support groups). Another benefit in the study is the opportunity to share my experiences with the potential that the work resulting from the study will benefit others and inform policy and programs for those who experience violence. This work will also help with other work on experience of IPV during emergencies and how to reach individuals and deliver necessary services during crises for both service providers and clients.

**Confidentiality and Privacy:** I understand that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the contents will be used only for understanding lived experiences and that my identity will be protected, and anonymity safeguarded as no quotes or examples in the analysis will be tied to any personal information or participants or organizations in any publication or reports. If I choose to participate in a focus group rather than an interview, I understand that there are limits to confidentiality of participating in a group activity. While the researchers will respect the confidentiality of participant data, I understand that they cannot guarantee that other members of the group will preserve the confidentiality of the information I will share. In order to minimize the risk of security breaches and to help ensure my confidentiality, it is recommended that I sign in out of my account, close my browser, not put on the camera, use a different name and lock my device when I am no longer using it.

**Legally required disclosure:** I understand that the research team has a legal responsibility and obligation to disclose information on child abuse and neglect under the Ontario Child and Family Services Act. Under the Act, a person must report that a child is or may be in need of protection to Children's Aid Society (CAS), even when the information is confidential or privileged. If, during the interview/focus group, information is disclosed that a child under the age of 18 is in danger of abuse or neglect from the abusive person in the home, a consult with experts (Project Advisory Committee of violence against women organizations) in the field will take place to determine disclosure to CAS. If the team of experts determines a report is necessary, the researcher will have to disclose that information to CAS.

**Conservation of Data:** The Zoom recorded video will be deleted after the session is complete and only the audio recording will be retained. The audio recorded data collected will be kept in a secure password protected computer and accessed only through password protected applications on a secure network, stored in a locked office. The data

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will be kept for 20 years. Since the data is electronic, it will be destroyed through secure deletion after 20-year period has ended.

**Compensation:** A \$50 gift card of my choosing (i.e., Amazon, Tim Hortons, Starbucks, e-transfer) will be provided for participating in this interview or focus group. I can choose any of the following options that best works for me in terms of receiving the gift card: electronic gift certificate, mailed gift certificate, direct e-transfer of \$50. If I choose to withdraw from the study during the interview/focus group, I will still receive this compensation.

**Voluntary Participation:** I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can leave from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered from an interview will be removed from the dataset and not used in the study. If I participate in a focus group, I understand that this is not possible because of the nature of the discussion with others participating in the focus group.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or their supervisor. If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity via email ([ethics@uottawa.ca](mailto:ethics@uottawa.ca)) or telephone (613-562-5387).

It is recommended that I save a copy of this consent form for my records. However, I can choose to not keep a copy and know to contact the principal investigator, Dina Idriss-Wheeler at [didri040@uottawa.ca](mailto:didri040@uottawa.ca), if I would like an electronic copy sent or mailed.

**Acceptance:** By signing my name below, I agree to participate in this research study.

Participant's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

OR

Click LINK for electronic form <https://www.di-w.com/consent-form>.

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