

What if I have any other questions?

We hope this leaflet answers the questions you may have, and that it shows the importance of the survey. If you have any other questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to ring one of the contacts listed below.

Your co-operation is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much for your help with this survey.

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www.scottishhealthsurvey.org

For further information and advice on healthy living please see the Healthier Scotland website:

www.takelifeon.co.uk

Information about common health conditions is available here:

www.nhsinform.co.uk

ScotCen
Social Research



The 2015 Scottish Health Survey

This survey is being carried out for the Scottish Government by ScotCen Social Research, an independent research institute, the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit at the University of Glasgow and academics from the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. This leaflet tells you more about the survey and why it is being done.

What is it about?

The first Scottish Health Survey was commissioned in 1995 by the Scottish Office because it was concerned about the lack of information about the health of people in Scotland. The survey was repeated again in 1998 and 2003 and has been conducted annually since 2008. The detailed information provided by these surveys has proved very valuable and is used to help develop ways of improving people's health and to plan the services people need at times of ill health. The 2015 survey will update the information collected in previous surveys.

The 2015 survey has questions about your general health, and about behaviour that can affect your health such as eating habits, physical activity, smoking and drinking. There are also some questions about diseases of the heart, lungs and chest. The Scottish Government are particularly interested in having this information because at present the rates of heart disease in Scotland are among the highest in the world.

The survey also collects, if you agree, some physical measurements such as height, weight and blood pressure. Some personal details such as age, sex and employment are also included to help interpret this information.

Why have we come to your household?

To visit every household in Scotland would take too long and cost too much money. Instead we select a sample of addresses in such a way that all addresses in the country have a chance of being chosen. Yours is one of those chosen for the 2015 survey.

Who will we want to speak to?

We would like to interview every adult (aged 16 and over) who lives in your household, and if there are any children aged 0-15 we would like to interview two of them. Parents or guardians will answer questions on behalf of children aged under 13.

What happens to the information I provide?

Your answers are treated with care and with full respect for your privacy. The information collected is used for statistical and research purposes only and will be dealt with according to the principles of the 1998 Data Protection Act. The Scottish Government and ScotCen guarantee that the survey results will not be published in a form that can reveal your identity and that no attempts will be made to identify individuals from their answers. Your name and address will only be known to the ScotCen research team unless you give your consent for it to be passed on. The Scottish Government, or other research organisations, with the permission of the Scottish Government, might then invite you to take part in a further health-related study.

If you agree and give us your written consent, your NHS health records, including information about in-patient or out-patient visits or diagnosis, will be linked with your survey answers. This increases the value of the information you provide. This is done in such a way that no data which can identify you or any other individual will be released.

If you were to decide at a later date that you no longer wanted the information collected about you to be used in the survey then it would be deleted.

Is the survey compulsory?

No. In all our surveys we rely on voluntary co-operation. The success of the survey depends on the goodwill and co-operation of those asked to take part. The more people who do take part, the more useful the results will be. You are free to withdraw from any part of the survey at any time, and you do not have to answer all the questions.

Do I get anything from the survey?

If you wish, you may have a record of your measurements. Other benefits from the survey will be indirect and in due course will come from any improvements in health and in health services which result from the survey.

What measurements are included in the survey?

Adults aged 16 and over will be asked to have their height, weight, waist circumference and blood pressure measured, and to provide urine and saliva samples. The interviewer has been given specialist training to conduct these measurements and to handle the samples. Taking part in the measurements and providing samples is voluntary – you can answer the questions in the rest of the survey and choose to miss out the measurements and samples if you prefer. The interviewer will give you a leaflet that explains more about the measurements and samples.

Any children aged 2-15 in your household that take part in the survey will be asked to have their height and weight measured. Children will not be asked to take part in any other measurements or to provide samples.

Who has reviewed the study?

The study has been looked at by an independent group of people called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. This study has been given a favourable opinion by the Research Ethics Committee for Wales on behalf of the NHS.