

# Operationalizing and Enhancing Digital Literacy among Older Adults

## Implied Informed Consent Form (ICF)/Letter of Information (LOI) for Prospective Research with Human Participants (Survey Research) – HSREB

**Study title:** Operationalizing and Enhancing Digital Literacy among Older Adults

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. John Puxty

**Affiliations:** School of Medicine, Queen's University and the Centre for Studies in Aging and Health, Providence Care

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**Co-Investigator(s):** Sarah Webster (Manager, Centre for Studies in Aging and Health) and Dr. Madison Robertson (Research Coordinator, Centre for Studies in Aging and Health)

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### 1. Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in a research study because you are an older adult living in Canada, with relevant experience and perspectives related to the research topic. This consent form provides information to help you make an informed decision to participate. This study has received ethical approval from the Queen's University Health Sciences and Affiliated Teaching Hospitals Research Ethics Board (HSREB).

Participation is voluntary, and you can decline to participate in any aspect of the research at any time. In this study, you will complete a short, one-time survey. This survey will be completed online but is available as a PDF to print if you prefer. It will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. This survey will ask questions about your understanding and definition of digital literacy for older adults. You do not need to answer any question you don't want to, and you can choose to withdraw from this study at any time without providing a reason.

### 2. Risks and benefits

There are no known risks to this study.

While there are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study, your participation will give you the opportunity to contribute your expertise and experiences to share a more inclusive and effective understanding of digital literacy for older adults in Canada. Your insight could influence future programs and policies that better address the needs of older adults across Canada.

We hope that the results of this study may benefit older adults across Canada in the future. The overall anticipated public and scientific benefit of this study is to establish a clear and comprehensive definition of digital literacy for older adults, which will help validate the barriers older adults face in achieving digital literacy and develop a preliminary plan to support community programs and policymakers in developing a strategy for improving digital literacy for older adults.

### **3. Confidentiality**

All the information collected during the research study will remain strictly confidential to the extent permitted by the applicable laws. If you decide to participate in this study, the research team will only collect the information needed. To protect your privacy, you will only be identified in the study documents by a participant ID. The master log linking your name to your participant ID will be stored separately from other study data and will be accessed only by authorized research team members. This master log will not leave the local site.

The study data will be stored in a controlled location (e.g., password protected files) on a secure network at Queen's University and/or Providence Care Hospital for five years after the completion of the study. After this storage period, the study data will be destroyed by the principal investigator, Dr. John Puxty.

During the study, for data collection, data analysis, monitoring, control, safety, and security, your study file may be accessed by the following organizations:

- Members of the study team, as delegated by the principal investigator, Dr. John Puxty
- Research Assistants, as delegated by the principal investigator, who have signed a confidentiality agreement
- Authorized Representatives of Queen's University, Providence Care, its affiliated hospitals and/or HSREB.

The results of this study may be published or shared during presentations at academic and community conferences, meetings or events. However, you will not be identified during the dissemination of study results or publication. All efforts will be made to protect your privacy, and the likelihood that someone may identify you is small, however it cannot be eliminated.

### **4. Incentives**

After submitting your survey responses, you will be directed to a separate survey and can enter your contact information to be entered into a draw for a chance to win a \$25 gift card to Tim Hortons. Your odds of winning are based on the number of individuals who participate in the

survey.

Your name and email will be stored securely and separately from your survey responses and permanently erased once the draw is complete. The survey will close on **Friday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 5:00 pm EDT**.

Entry into the draw will close once all survey responses have been received.

The draw will take place within two weeks after the survey closes and be conducted by a random number generator.

Winners will be contacted using the contact information provided upon entry into the draw. If a winner has not responded within two weeks, the winner will forfeit the prize, and another draw will be held to determine a winner. The prize must be accepted as awarded or forfeited and cannot be redeemed for cash.

Participation is not required for entry into the draw; to enter without participating in the study, please email the research team at [robertsm1@providencecare.ca](mailto:robertsm1@providencecare.ca) with your name and contact information. Entries must be received by the closing date above to be eligible. We are not responsible for lost, late, incomplete, illegible, damaged, destroyed, postage due, or misdirected entries. No bulk mailings will be accepted. All entries will become the property of the study team and will not be returned. If you have any questions, please contact HSREB at [Researchethics@queensu.ca](mailto:Researchethics@queensu.ca).

## 5. Contact information

If you have questions about this study or if you suffer a research-related injury, you can contact:

1. Dr. Madison Robertson, Research Coordinator and Co-Investigator - [Robertsm1@providencecare.ca](mailto:Robertsm1@providencecare.ca) or (613) 544-4900 x52018
2. Sarah Webster, Manager and Co-Investigator - [Websters@providencecare.ca](mailto:Websters@providencecare.ca) or (613) 544-4900 x52016

For ethics concerns, please contact HSREB at 1-844-535-2988 (Toll free in North America) or email [researchethics@queensu.ca](mailto:researchethics@queensu.ca). For research conducted outside of North America use: 1-613-533-2988. If non-English speaking participants wish to contact the Chair for ethics concerns, translation assistance may be necessary, as the REB Chairs communicate in English only.

## 6. Conflict of interest

There are no conflicts of interest to declare related to this study.

## \* 7. Consent

I agree that:



- I have read this Informed Consent Form (ICF)/Letter of Information (LOI).
- By consenting, I have not waived any legal right in the event of research-related harm.

I consent to Participating in the Main Study. **Selecting “Yes” and proceeding to completion of survey/questionnaire implies your consent to the study as outline above.**

Yes       No