

Table S1. Past and potential volunteer common responses to questions requiring free text responses

		Past volunteers (n=55)	Potential volunteers (n=57)
A	<i>Explanations related to whether the location of the research department being on a hospital site would impact the decision to participate in physiology research</i>	Participating in a study at the hospital would not offer any significant increased risk	I assume that all necessary required precautions will have been thought through and managed by experienced knowledgeable operatives and implemented for the duration of the project(s)
		Slight concerns as there is through traffic to the main hospital	I will not go where people gather
		Would still participate	I am not concerned about catching COVID-19 if I visited the hospital
		Puts me at added risk at a vulnerable age	I do not want to go into a hospital at the present time because of the proximity of COVID-19 cases
		Only potential issue is maintaining adequate social distancing in car parks etc	I would feel fine about hospital location if safety measures in place
		I don't see it as any more hazardous than going to a supermarket. In fact, it's probably much safer as you do see some rather bizarre behaviour in shops as regards social distancing	I would go wherever needed for research participation. Obviously within reasonable distance from home
		A hospital environment helps put your mind at ease, which in these times is very important	It's an appropriate place for research to be done
		If the number of cases go up I would prefer not to go near the hospital.	As long as access it not through the hospital
		As long as safety measures are put in place, the location is irrelevant.	Travel and parking
		At present I'm very reluctant to go indoors anywhere unless really necessary (e.g., have	Hospitals are safer now than in March re COVID-19

		<p>been to hospital to collect my husband after a procedure). Am probably over-reacting but as husband has some medical conditions I'm being extra cautious</p>	
		I would participate no matter what the consequences	It doesn't matter where it is if precautions are in place
		I guess that a hospital environment would increase the risk of infection a little. On the other hand, there would be plenty of help from medical staff at hand! Therefore, my answer is a neutral one.	
		I am a supporter of research and trust that all appropriate precautions will be taken for everyone's safety	
		While I think the precautions taken as indicated are robust and comprehensive, I do question if research would really be better postponed until say next spring, when more will be known about the virus, and there may be a vaccine	
B	<i>Reasons for feeling unsure about taking part in an 'acute' research study</i>	Unwilling to spend long periods of time in the hospital	COVID-19 risk
		Studies too invasive/exhaustive	Health/health-related issues (unrelated to COVID-19)
		Pandemic level	Studies too invasive/exhaustive
		Unwilling to leave pet/s for long periods of time	Unsure about attending anywhere unfamiliar during this time
		Possible exposure/contact with others who are not worried about regular washing of hand, wearing of masks, <i>etc</i>	Time commitment and availability

		Reluctant to use public transport to attend research visits	Depends on what the studies/procedures involve
		Health/health-related issues (unrelated to COVID-19)	Travelling difficulties
		Duration of study visit	Not confident in group sessions
		COVID-19 risk	
		Anaesthetic (lidocaine) resistant	
C	<i>Reasons for feeling unsure about taking part in a 'chronic' research study</i>	Inconvenient	COVID-19 risk
		COVID-19 risk	Personal reasons
		Time commitment	Health/health-related issues (unrelated to COVID-19)
		Reluctant to use public transport to attend research visits	Travelling difficulties
		Depends on what the studies/procedures involve	Depends on level of invasiveness
		Number of visits increasing the COVID-19 risk	Depends on what the studies/procedures involve
		Health/health-related issues (unrelated to COVID-19)	Time commitment and availability
		Depends on study visit flexibility	Number of visits
			Personal/work commitments
D	<i>Suggested possible COVID-19 safety measures that would make volunteers more likely to participate in biomedical research (beyond the already employed standards)</i>	Maximum number of volunteers at any one time	Access to hand sanitiser
		Temperature checks (e.g., on arrival/exit)	Temperature checks
		Quick economic COVID-19 test	Gloves

		Good ventilation	Clear indications of which way to walk within the research building
		Disposable drinks containers and plates	Social distancing
		Quarantine for 'lent out' equipment	COVID-19 testing of researchers and volunteers prior to and after visits
		Following "hands/face/space"	
		Regular COVID-19 testing of researchers (e.g., on arrival/exit)	
		Access to hand sanitiser	
E	<i>Additional volunteer comments/suggestions</i>	Minimum hands-on contact	Feels it's important to continue with biomedical research in areas other than COVID-19
		Would be happy to participate online and possibly outdoors but not within research site	Home COVID-19 test kits to be returned and collected
		Would participate once a vaccine is available	Hospital is not a good location for volunteers
			Dedicated parking for volunteers

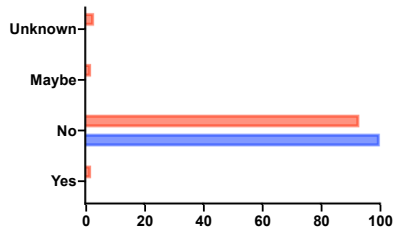
Table S2. Summary findings related to each higher order theme that emerged from both the past and potential volunteer focus groups

Theme	Summary
<i>Positive attitude towards volunteering during COVID-19</i>	Both cohorts reported physical and mental benefits associated with volunteering with little impact of the pandemic, providing risks are managed. Past volunteers felt that volunteering was less risky than normal activities and potential volunteers felt that volunteering “...gives us something to do”.
<i>Concerns about volunteering during COVID-19</i>	Both cohorts reported “age” was a concern. They were worried about passing the virus on. Past volunteers expressed concerns about building occupancy, using public transport, asymptomatic carriage of the virus and breaching government rules. Potential volunteers mentioned the reliance on others taking the correct precautions.
<i>Research topic</i>	Both cohorts reported that “research topic” would not influence their decision, seemingly viewing research on muscle/general physiology as important as that on COVID-19.
<i>Study design</i>	Generally, both cohorts expressed that the design of a study (i.e., acute or chronic) wouldn’t influence their decision to volunteer. However, they did appreciate that chronic studies may increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.
<i>Trust</i>	“Trust” in the research team and their ability to manage COVID-19 risk was evident in both cohorts.
<i>Agreement between volunteers</i>	There was much agreement within and between both cohorts in regard to many of the higher order themes.

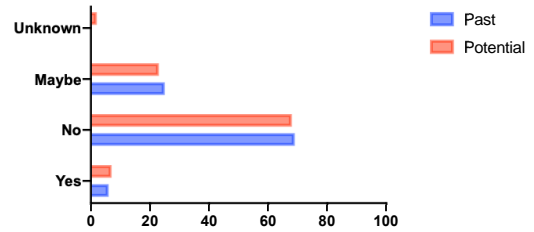
<i>Familiarity</i>	“Familiarity” was a theme identified in the past volunteers only, which represented volunteers having positive views towards re-volunteering due to familiarity with the researchers and research facility.

Figure S1. Past and potential volunteer multiple-choice answers to the online questionnaire

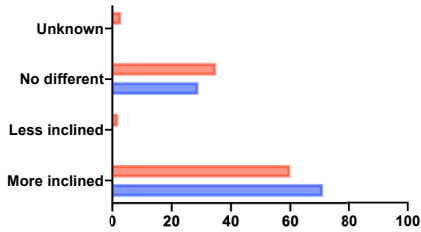
A *Would you have any objections to having your body temperature recorded on arrival to the research department?*



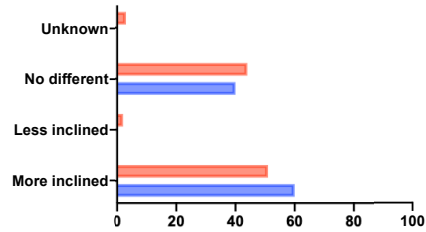
B *Do you feel that face masks being worn during face-to-face visits would make communication difficult for you?*



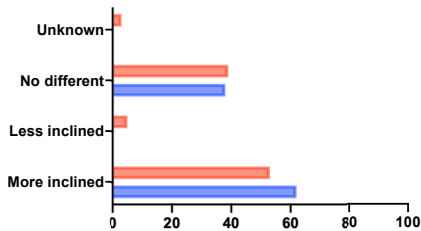
C *Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if staff were regularly tested for COVID-19 using our in-house diagnostic test?*



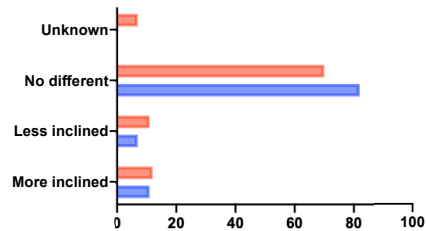
D *Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if we tested you for COVID-19 using our in-house diagnostic test, prior to participation?*



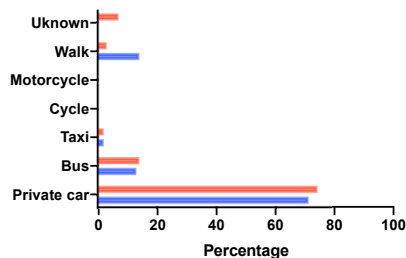
E *Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research if we tested you for COVID-19 antibodies using our in-house testing procedure, prior to participation?*



F *Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if it was COVID-19 related research?*



G *Which mode of transport would you most likely to use to travel to a research visit?*



H *If you would most likely be travelling by public transport, how safe would you feel doing this considering COVID-19?*

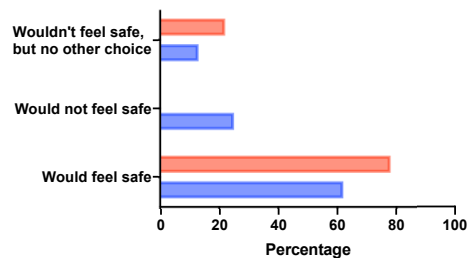


Figure S2. Past volunteer questionnaire

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public willingness to participate in physiology research

25/01/2021, 14:49

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public willingness to participate in physiology research

For individuals who have previously participated in physiology research

*Required

1. Q1. Age *

Mark only one oval.

65+

2. Q2. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

Male

Female

Other

Prefer not to say

3. Q3. Ethnicity *

4. Q4. First 4 characters of Postcode (e.g., DE22) *

5. Q5. Have you, or anyone in your household, tested positive for Covid-19? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes, myself

Yes, a member of my household

No

6. Q6. Have you, or anyone in your household, had a suspected case of Covid-19 but was not tested positive? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes, myself

Yes, a member of my household

No

7. Q7. If you answered yes to either of the previous two questions, would you say that you, or your household member, have returned to all of your normal (pre-Covid-19) daily activities? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

Mostly

Not applicable

8. Q8. How worried are you about catching Covid-19? *

Mark only one oval.

- Not worried at all
- A little worried
- Somewhat worried/neutral
- Fairly worried
- Very worried

Feelings towards participating in different types of physiology research.

Thinking about the different types of physiology research we ask people to take part in AND the Covid-19 health and safety measures we have outlined in the cover letter, please indicate via the questions below how you feel about taking part in this type of physiology research. Please remember we aren't asking you to take part, just about your feelings towards participating.

9. Q9. We already have a number of Covid-19 safety measures in place in our research department. In addition to enhanced cleaning, researchers and participants will be required to wear a face covering at all times possible, and the building has a one-way system in operation. The number of researchers that a participant comes in to contact with during each visit will be the minimum possible and thorough, regular hand-washing will be mandatory. Please use the space below to outline any other measures that would make you more likely to participate in a physiology research study (please put N/A if you feel no further measures would be required). *

10. Q10. Do you feel that face masks being worn by researchers and participants during face-to-face visits would make communication difficult for you? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

11. Q11. Our research department is located in a University building on the Royal Derby Hospital site. Would the location of our department being on a hospital site impact your decision to participate in a future physiology research study? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, it would definitely make me feel less likely to participate
- Yes, it would make me feel a little less likely to participate
- No, it would not impact how I felt about participating
- Yes, it would make me feel a little more likely to participate
- Yes, it would definitely make me feel more likely to participate

12. Q12. Please use the space below to provide us with some more information about your answer to the question above. *

13. Q13. Would you have any objections to having your body temperature recorded (using an infrared thermal forehead/ear thermometer) on arrival to our research department? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

14. Q14. Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if our staff were regularly tested for Covid-19 using our in-house diagnostic test? *

Mark only one oval.

- More inclined
 Less inclined
 No different

15. Q15. Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if we tested you for Covid-19 using our in-house diagnostic test, prior to study participation? This test would be done via a small blood sample, and would indicate whether you currently have Covid-19. *

Mark only one oval.

- More inclined
 Less inclined
 No different

16. Q15. Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if we tested you for Covid-19 antibodies using our in-house testing procedures, prior to study participation? This test would require a small blood sample and would determine whether you've developed antibodies against the virus. If the results show that you have antibodies, this means that you were likely infected with Covid-19 at some time in the past. *

Mark only one oval.

- More inclined
 Less inclined
 No different

17. Q16. Please indicate on the scale below how you'd feel about taking part in an 'acute study' type of research. This type of research normally involves 1 or 2 study visits of 6-8 hours in duration. *

Mark only one oval.

- I would definitely not consider taking part at the moment
 I would likely not consider taking part at the moment
 I may consider/ am unsure about taking part at the moment
 I would likely consider taking part at the moment
 I would definitely consider taking part at the moment

18. Q17. Is your answer to the question above related to the Covid-19 pandemic? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Partly

19. Q18. For those of you who feel unsure about taking part in this type of physiology research, we would like to understand some of the reasons for this, whether they are related to Covid-19 or not. Please use the space below to give us some more information about your concerns (please put N/A if not applicable). *

20. Q19. Please indicate on the scale below how you'd feel about taking part in a 'chronic' study' type of research? This type of research normally involves short visits a few times each week for 4 to 8 weeks. *

Mark only one oval.

- I would definitely not consider taking part at the moment
- I would likely not consider taking part at the moment
- I may consider/ am unsure about taking part at the moment
- I would likely consider taking part at the moment
- I would definitely consider taking part at the moment

21. Q20. Is your answer to the question above related to the Covid-19 pandemic? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Partly

22. Q21. For those of you who feel unsure about taking part in this type of physiology research, we would love to understand some of the reasons for this, whether they are related to Covid-19 or not. Please use the space below to give us some more information about your concerns (Please put N/A if not applicable). *

23. Q22. What type of physiology research study have you previously taken part in with us? *

Mark only one oval.

- Acute study
- Chronic study
- Acute and Chronic study

24. Q23. Having previously taken part in a research study with us, are you more or less inclined to take part in a future physiology research study at a unit where you know the researchers? *

Mark only one oval.

- More inclined
- Less inclined
- No different

25. Q24. Would you feel more or less inclined to participate in a physiology research study if it was Covid-19 related research ? *

Mark only one oval.

- More inclined
- Less inclined
- No different

26. Q25. Would the provision of a inconvenience allowance for your time make you feel more inclined to take part in a physiology research study? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, this would make me more inclined to participate
- No, this would not affect my decision to participate

27. Q26. Which of these modes of transport would you most likely use to travel to a research visit with us? *

Mark only one oval.

- Private car
- Bus
- Taxi
- Cycle
- Motorcycle
- Walk

28. Q27. If you answered public transport (bus or train) to the answer above, considering COVID-19 how safe would you feel doing this? *

Mark only one oval.

- I would feel safe travelling by public transport, and would happily do this
- I would not feel safe travelling by public transport, and would not do this
- I would not feel safe travelling by public transport, but would do this as I have no other option

29. Q28. As mentioned in the invitation letter for this survey, we would like to invite you to take part in a small focus group (made up of a researcher and up to 5 other participants). These groups will be conducted online via MS Teams and you will have the option to remain anonymous during the group by deselecting your camera if you wish. These groups will last less than 1 hour and you will be sent full instructions of how to join. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, I'd like to take part in a focus group
- No, I'm not able to take part in a focus group
- I'd like to take part but am unsure what I'd need to do

30. Q29. If you would like to take part in a one of these groups or would like more information about this, please provide your name and email address below (please put N/A if not applicable). *

31. Q30. Finally, we'd like to thank you for your time. We appreciate your answers and the time you have taken to help us. We have left a comments section below for you to tell us anything else you can think of that would help with our biomedical research studies moving forward (please put N/A if not applicable). *

Thank you!



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Figure S3. Potential volunteer questionnaire

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public willingness to participate in physiology research

25/01/2021, 14:55

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public willingness to participate in physiology research

For individuals who have not previously participated in physiology research

***Required**

1. Q1. Age *

Mark only one oval.

65+

2. Q2. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

Male

Female

Other

Prefer not to say

3. Q3. Ethnicity *

4. Q4. First 4 characters of Postcode (e.g., DE22) *

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 Less inclined
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