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INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Title of study:

Shared Decision-Making in Thoracic Surgery: An International Survey of Thoracic Surgeons

I would like to invite you to participate in an international research study exploring shared decision-making in thoracic surgery, led by the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS) and conducted in collaboration with the General Thoracic Surgical Club (GTSC), the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), the Japanese Association for Chest Surgery (JACS) and the European Association for Cardio-Thoracic Surgery (EACTS).

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to better understand how thoracic surgeons involved in lung cancer care make treatment decisions and incorporate patient preferences into everyday clinical practice.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to participate because you are a healthcare professional involved in thoracic surgery or thoracic oncology decision-making.

The study is open to consultant/attending thoracic surgeons, fellows, residents, registrars, trainees and other healthcare professionals involved in the management of patients with thoracic malignancies. Participants must be aged 18 years or over, able to complete the survey in English, and willing to participate voluntarily.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part in the study you will be asked to complete an anonymous online questionnaire hosted on the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS) SurveyMonkey platform. Before accessing the questionnaire, you will be asked to confirm that you have read and understood the information and agree to participate.

The questionnaire is expected to take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete and can be completed at a time and place convenient to you using any internet-connected computer, tablet or smartphone.

The survey includes three short clinical case scenarios (vignettes) and a series of structured questions exploring how treatment decisions are made in thoracic oncology. You will also be asked about your views on shared decision-making, multidisciplinary working, the use of decision-support tools, and a small number of professional characteristics, such as your clinical role, years in practice, practice setting and geographical region.

No patient information will be collected. The questionnaire does not request your name, email address, IP address or any other directly identifiable personal information. At the end of the survey, you may choose to provide an email address if you wish to be considered for collaborator recognition in any resulting publication. This is entirely optional, will be collected separately from your survey



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responses, and cannot be linked to your questionnaire answers. As part of participation, you will be asked to provide your responses to the clinical case scenarios and questionnaire items, together with a limited amount of professional information, such as your clinical role, years in practice, practice setting and geographical region. This information is necessary to understand current approaches to shared decision-making among thoracic surgeons and to explore whether attitudes and practices vary across different professional groups and healthcare settings.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. After reading this Participant Information Sheet, you are encouraged to contact the research team if you have any questions that may help you decide whether to take part.

Once your responses have been submitted, they will be incorporated into an anonymised dataset and it will no longer be possible to withdraw your data because they cannot be linked back to you.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

This study is considered to involve minimal risk. There are no physical, medical or psychological risks associated with participation. The questionnaire focuses on professional opinions and decision-making in thoracic oncology and does not ask participants to disclose sensitive personal information or patient data. Appropriate measures have been taken to protect your confidentiality. Survey responses are collected anonymously, and all results will be reported in aggregate form so that individual participants cannot be identified.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You are unlikely to receive any direct personal benefit from taking part in this study.

However, your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how shared decision-making is currently practised in thoracic surgery across different countries and healthcare settings. The findings may help inform future research, educational initiatives and the development of strategies to support patient-centred decision-making in thoracic oncology.

How will we use information about you?

We will need to use information you through your responses to the online questionnaire for this research project.

This information will not include your name, contact details, IP address, ESTS membership number or any other directly identifiable personal information. People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly.

Data Protection Statement

The European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS) is the Data Controller for this research. This means that ESTS determines how and why personal data are processed and is responsible for ensuring that they are handled in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.



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The questionnaire does not collect your name, email address, IP address, ESTS membership number, or any other directly identifiable personal information.

If you choose to provide an email address for collaborator recognition in any resulting publication, it will be collected separately from your survey responses, stored securely, and will not be linked to your questionnaire data. It will be used solely for publication administration and deleted once this process has been completed.

ESTS will also act as the long-term custodian of the anonymised study dataset. Access will be restricted to authorised members of the research team. Anonymised data will be retained securely for five years following completion of the study, in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and ESTS data governance policies.

Any future use or sharing of the dataset for scientific research will involve anonymised data only and will be subject to applicable ethical and data governance requirements. No individual participant will be identifiable.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

You are free to withdraw at any point of the study, without having to give a reason but we will keep information about you that we already have.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time before submitting the questionnaire by simply closing your browser, without giving a reason.

Anonymised research data may be retained and used for future research related to shared decision-making. Any future sharing of anonymised data with other researchers will be considered on a case-by-case basis and carried out in accordance with applicable ethical and data governance requirements.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information:

- By contacting the University of Hull Data Protection Officer by emailing dataprotection@hull.ac.uk OR University of York Data Protection Officer by emailing dataprotection@york.ac.uk
- By reviewing the University of Hull Research Participant privacy notice: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/choose-hull/university-and-region/key-documents/docs/quality/research-participant-privacy-notice.pdf>;
- By reviewing the University of York Research Participant privacy notice: [Privacy notice - Research participants - Records Management and Information Governance, University of York](#).

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of this study will be presented at national and international scientific meetings and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

Only anonymised and aggregated results will be reported. No individual participant will be identifiable in any publication or presentation arising from this study.



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Participants who wish to learn more about the study findings may contact the Principal Investigator after completion of the study. Information about any resulting publications will be made available on request.

The anonymised dataset will be retained securely in accordance with the study Data Management Plan and may be used for future research in line with applicable ethical approvals and data governance requirements.

Who has reviewed this study?

Research studies are reviewed by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and been given a favourable opinion by the Hull York Medical School Research Ethics Committee as the lead investigator is a member of this Institution.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact me using the following contact details:

Dr Cecilia Pompili, MD, PhD
Principal Investigator
Hull York Medical School
University of Hull
Cottingham Road
Hull HU6 7RX
United Kingdom

Email: C.Pompili@leeds.ac.uk
Alternative email: Cecilia.Pompili@hyms.ac.uk

Dr Marcin Ostrowski, MD PhD MBA
ESTS Survey Coordinator
Email: ostrowski.family@gmail.com

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study, you can contact the Hull York Medical School using the details below for further advice and information:

email: governance@hyms.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.