



The bone & soft tissue cancer charity

Taking part in market research

As a member of the sarcoma community you may be asked to take part in market research. Here is some guidance to help you make an informed choice about taking part.

What is market research?

Market research is a method used by some companies and organisations to gather information on the needs and preferences of a certain audience. This can help shape the way certain products or services are developed so they meet the needs of the target audience.

Pharmaceutical companies may want to conduct market research on the sarcoma community. This could be to help shape the way they communicate with sarcoma patients or to help the pharmaceutical company learn more about the patient journey.

Pharmaceutical companies will hire market research companies to carry out research on their behalf. As a member of the sarcoma community, a patient, carer or family member, you may be contacted to take part in a market research project.

How do market research companies get my details?

Market research companies recruit participants using a number of methods.

Database of potential participants

Many market research companies have their own database of individuals who are interested in taking part in trials. You may have signed up to

take part in market research and be on a register of potential candidates.

Patient representative organisations and charities

Market researchers may contact patient organisations and charities and ask them to promote their projects through social media or through support group channels.

Social media

Market researchers can find sarcoma patients from Facebook or through other online support groups. If you have a blog or fundraising page you may also be contacted through these channels.

Support groups

Support group leaders may be contacted if the contact details of the group are in the public domain.

Should I take part in a market research project?

The choice to take part in a market research project is entirely up to you. In taking part, you may have the opportunity to impact the design of new products or services. Some market researchers offer to pay participants to take part or they may pay your expenses.

Considerations before taking part

There are a few things to consider before you agree to take part in a market research project. Researchers should provide you with enough information so you can understand the nature of the project and how it will benefit the sarcoma

community. If you are unclear about any aspect of the project ask some questions until you are clear about your involvement. You may want to find out:

- Which company is behind the research?
- What are the aims and methods of the research?
- How it will benefit the sarcoma community?
- What am I being asked to do?
For example, attend a focus group meeting, fill in a survey, write a day-to-day diary over a weekly period.
- How much of my time will it take?
- Are there any financial incentives?
Check whether it is just your expenses that are paid for or whether you will also be paid for your time.
- What is your data protection policy?
Find out how your personal data will be used
- Will I be informed of the results of the project; if so, how will you contact me?

Sarcoma UK's position

Sarcoma UK carries out market research to help us improve the service we provide to the sarcoma community. We also gather evidence from people affected by sarcoma to campaign to change policy or improve sarcoma services in the UK. Sarcoma UK:

- Will not pass on any personal details to third parties, including market research companies
- Will not commission market research companies to carry out research on behalf of the charity
- Will not endorse any market research projects aimed at the sarcoma community
- Will not promote any schemes either through email or social media

Further information

The Market Research Society provides clear guidance and advice for Researchers. It states the code of conduct all market researchers should follow and details of how to make a complaint.

www.mrs.org.uk/standards

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Sarcoma UK is the only cancer charity in the UK focusing on all types of sarcoma.

This factsheet has been produced by the Information and Support Team at Sarcoma UK.

Sarcoma UK makes every reasonable effort to ensure that the information we provide is up-to-date, accurate and unbiased. We hope this factsheet adds to the medical advice you have received and helps you make informed decisions about your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of your care team if you are worried about any medical issues.

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