Participant Information Sheet: era App Beta Testing

The Supporting Healthy Ageing – Reflection and Communication (SHA-RC) team are looking for beta testers to test their innovative AI-driven health and wellbeing App between March and May 2025.

- The era App is a web-based app (no download required), which is designed to prompt users to Explore, Reflect and Act on their health and well-being issues and concerns.
- We have designed the era App to address a support and research gap in the mid-later life age range (i.e. over 40s), however, this pilot is open to all age ranges.
- Our research has found that employees need better supports to Explore and Reflect on their health and well-being at work, and in how to Act to reach workplace supports.

What is the technology behind the App?

Using a locally hosted, open-source Large Language Model (LLM), the era App encourages individuals to Explore their health in relation to work via conversations with an AI assistant. Individuals can then Reflect on changes in their health over time and are presented with personalised Actions based on Organisational resources. For UoE test users, the App will direct the user to appropriate resources within the University of Edinburgh. The era App does not give medical advice.

What am I being asked to do?

- We are looking for Staff at the University of Edinburgh to test the era App in order to help us refine and develop the app as part of an Impact Accelerator Award (IAA) funded project.
- Participants will be asked to use the app for between 4-8 weeks
- You will be asked to complete a brief survey at the start and end of your testing experience.

How are you ensuring data protection and privacy?

- All user data (user accounts, messages, and app interactions) will be stored in a secure and encrypted database on a University of Edinburgh server and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Messages that you exchange with the AI assistant will not be shared with anyone, and will not be used to train AI models – this is one of the main reasons that we use a locally hosted LLM.
- Anonymised data representing app usage, health index scores, and personalised action recommendations will be shared with the research team for the purposes of evaluating the app; and may be included in future research outputs (e.g. publications and presentations).
- You have the right to withdraw from the pilot at any point, after which all of your data will be deleted.

Who is involved?

The Business School are leading on this project. Dr Belinda Steffan (PI) and Professor Wendy Loretto (Co-I) are working with Dr Evan Morgan from the Institute for Design Informatics, who is leading on developing the App.

What will I learn from my participation?

- You will gain greater insight into your own health and well-being.
- You will learn where to find support from the University of Edinburgh, as your employer.

If you have any further questions, please email SHAW@business-school.ed.ac.uk. You can find more about the project on www.shaw.business-school.ed.ac.uk.