24 July 2023

[Address]

## Subject: Expression of interest in participating in research on leaving wardship

Hello,

I am a researcher in the National Disability Authority (NDA) and I am writing to invite you, and the Committee who acts on your behalf, to contact me if you would like to take part in a research study. The NDA is an independent statutory body that advises government about disability related issues.

The aim of the research is to evaluate the end of the system of wardship in Ireland and to document the experiences of people who are Wards of Court and the Committees that act on their behalf in their transition to a supported decision-making system. It is hoped that the findings of this research will show how the ending of wardship and the new Decision Support Service is working and provide learning to improve the process.

We are interested in hearing from you regardless of whether or not you have applied to exit the Wards of Court system.

This invitation has been sent to you by the Wards of Court Office at the request of the NDA. The NDA does not have access to any information about persons who are Wards of Court or the Committees that act on their behalf. This research is separate to the work that the Wards of Court Office is doing to support people to exit wardship.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, please read the enclosed Participant Information Leaflet. If you wish you can discuss it with a family member, an advocate or your Committee. Expressing an interest in participating in the research does not mean you have any obligation to participate.

You should clearly understand the risks and benefits of taking part in this study so that you can make the decision that is right for you. This process is known as ‘Informed Consent’. Participation is voluntary, if you decide not to take part there will be no consequences for you or if you act as a Committee, for the person whom you act on behalf of.

Take time to make your decision and to consider the information provided. If you wish to express an interest in participating in this research or need any further information please contact us at wardsresearch@nda.ie or by phone at 087 671 2376 (Monday to Thursday 9am to 1pm)

Yours Sincerely,

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Caroline O’Nolan

Senior Research Officer,

National Disability Authority.