**Codebook for “iPOF\_survey\_t123\_core”, v1.4 23/01/2025**

This codebook shows the iPOF survey questions and their associated variable names and response codes, for the t1, t2, and t3 data.   
The associated datafiles, which all contain N = 791 cases, are:

“iPOF\_survey\_t123\_core.csv”. Comma Separated Value (.csv) format, plain-text file. The first row contains the variable names.

“iPOF\_survey\_t123\_core.dta”. Stata format.

“iPOF\_survey\_t123\_core.sav”. SPSS format.

Missing data: in the .csv file, all missing responses (which are missing by design for some questions) are coded “NA”. In the .dta and .sav files, missing responses to numeric variables are indicted by “.”, and missing responses to text/string variables are indicated by “NA”.

**Contents of this codebook:**

1. Survey items: Shows the order and content of the survey questions, the associated variable names, and response formats. Variables beginning “t1\_” were collected at time 1, those beginning “t2\_” at time 2, and “t3\_” for time 3. Only variables in with Q ids from 1.x to 6.x were collected at all three waves.
   1. NB Please note that in some cases some variables are reverse coded, check carefully for the wording in this codebook before calculating any variables to avoid making mistakes.
2. Additional and derived variables: Shows additional variables (e.g. ids, timestamps)
3. Variables designed to “flag” factors that may indicate the response was made in bad faith (e.g. automated bots, multiple attempts by human users, indifferent attempts by human users).
4. Variables that were used to exclude cases from this dataset. These variables are not in this “final” dataset, but they were used to exclude respondents that were considered to be acting in bad faith from N = 1114 respondents that completed the t1 survey in five minutes or more.

# Survey Items

| **Q id.** | **Displayed text** | **Response options and coding** | **Variable name  (and variable coding, if different from Response options)** | **Next** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0.0** | **“Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.**  The survey contains several sections. These ask about your use of the forum and how it makes you feel, the staff / moderators of the forum, your mental health, your use of health services, and a little bit about yourself. It should take around 15 minutes to complete.  We appreciate that your answers may depend on how you are feeling right now, and sometimes you might find it hard to give an answer because you want to say “….it depends”. Don’t worry – just give the answer that best reflects how you feel.  **In this first section we would like to know about your use of this forum”** |  |  | **0.1a** |
| 0.1a  0.1b  0.1c  0.1d | “Thinking about the **first time** you ever came to this forum, which options best describe **the main reason** for your visit?” (pick more than one if you like) | “I wanted to find help, advice, information, or support for **myself**” (yes = 1, no = 0)  “I wanted to find help, advice, information, or support for **someone else** (e.g. friends, family)**”** (yes = 1, no = 0)  “I wanted to offer help, advice, support, or information to **other forum users**” (yes = 1, no = 0)  “Other reasons (please write in)”  (yes = 1, no = 0)) | t1\_visit\_why\_0\_a  t1\_visit\_why\_0\_b  t1\_visit\_why\_0\_c  t1\_visit\_why\_0\_d  t1\_visit\_why\_0\_d\_text  (free text input) | 0.2 |
| 0.2 | How long ago was your **first** visit to this forum? | 0 “This is my first visit”  1 “Less than a month ago”  2 “A month or more ago, but less than a year” 3 “A year or more ago” | t1\_visit\_first | 1.1 |
| 1.1 | “In the **last six weeks**, approximately how often would you say you have visited this forum on average?” | 0 “This is the first time”  1 “Less than once a week”  2 “Once a week or more, but less than every day” 3 “Every day” | t1\_visit\_freq | 1.2 |
| 1.2 | “In the **last six weeks**, approximately how much time have you usually spent on this forum on **each visit**?” | 0 “Less than 5 minutes”  1 “more than 5 minutes, but less than half an hour”  2 “More than half an hour, but less than an hour”  3 “An hour or more” | t1\_visit\_time | 1.3 |
| 1.3 | “In the **last six weeks**, how often have you read messages on this forum that **resonated** with your own experiences and/or concerns?” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_read | 1.4 |
| 1.4 | “In the **last six weeks**, how many times have you **replied or reacted to (e.g. liked) messages by others** on this forum?” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_reply | 1.5 |
| 1.5 | “In the **last six weeks**, how many times have you made an **original post** o**r started a new thread** on this forum? (That is, not a reply or response to another’s message)” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_post | If 0, 1.7  If > 0, 1.6 |
| 1.6 | “In the **last six weeks**, when you have made original posts **or started new threads on** this forum, how often have **you received any replies or reactions** from other users (not from staff / moderators)?” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_receive | 1.7 |
|  | “In the **last six weeks**, when you have received replies or reactions from **other users** (not staff / moderators), how often...” |  |  |  |
| 1.7 | “... were these responses received **quickly?**” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_replied\_quick | 1.8 |
| 1.8 | “... were these responses **constructive** and **helpful?”** | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_replied\_helpful | 1.9 |
| 1.9 | “... did these responses make you feel **ignored** or **misunderstood?**” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_replied\_ignored | 1.10 |
| 1.10 | “...were these responses **friendly?**” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_replied\_friendly | 1.11 |
| 1.11 | “...did these responses seem **authentic?**” | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times”  2 “Most times I visit”  3 “Every time I visit” | t1\_visit\_replied\_auth | 1.12 |
| 1.12a  1.12b  1.12c  1.12d | “Thinking about the **last six weeks**, which options best describe the main reasons for your visit(s)?” (pick more than one if you like) | “I wanted to find help, advice, information, or support for **myself**” (1 = yes, 0 = no)  “I wanted to find help, advice, information, or support for **someone else** (e.g. friends, family)**”** (1 = yes, 0 = no)  “I wanted to offer help, advice, support, or information to **other forum users**”  (1 = yes, 0 = no)  “Other reasons (please write in)” (1 = yes, 0 = no) | t1\_visit\_why\_1\_a  t1\_visit\_why\_1\_b  t1\_visit\_why\_1\_c  t1\_visit\_why\_1\_d  t1\_visit\_why\_1\_d\_text (Free text input) | 1.13 |
| 1.13a  1.13b  1.13c | “Thinking about the last six weeks, which of these options best describes the main type of support you were hoping to find or offer on this forum?” | “Practical support, such as asking for or offering advice and information” (1 = yes, 0 = no)  “Emotional support, either to offer it or to appreciate it from others. (1 = yes, 0 = no)  “Other reasons (please write in)” (1 = yes, 0 = no) | t1\_visit\_why\_2\_a  t1\_visit\_why\_2\_b  t1\_visit\_why\_2\_c  t1\_visit\_why\_2\_c\_text (Free text input) | 1.14 |
| 1.14 | “How likely are you to continue using this forum?” | 0 “Very unlikely”  1 “Unlikely”  2 “not sure”  3 “Likely”  4 “Very likely” | t1\_visit\_again | 2.0 |
| **2.0** | **“How has your use of the forum over the last six weeks changed how you feel? (even if you visited the forum to help or support others). Has using the forum made you feel…”** |  |  | **2.1** |
| 2.1 | “…happier?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_happier | 2.2 |
| 2.2 | “…more hopeful?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_hopeful | 2.3 |
| 2.3 | “…more alone?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_alone | 2.4 |
| 2.4 | “…less isolated?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_isolated | 2.5 |
| 2.5 | “…more supported?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_supported | 2.6 |
| 2.6 | “…more understood?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_understood | 2.7 |
| 2.7 | “…more informed?” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_informed | 2.8 |
| 2.8 | “... more able to help other people by posting in the forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_others | 2.9 |
| 2.9 | “The other people in the forum seem to experience similar challenges to me” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_help\_same | 3.0 |
| **3.0** | “**Now we would like to know what you think about the staff / moderators on this forum**  (staff and moderators have approval rights for posts to the forum, i.e. they can approve or delete posts made by users)” |  |  | 3.1 |
| 3.1 | I understand the role of staff / moderators on this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_1 | 3.2 |
| 3.2 | “The staff / moderators on this forum seem competent | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_2 | 3.3 |
| 3.3 | “The staff / moderators on this forum seem fair” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_3 | 3.4 |
| 3.4 | “I like the way staff / moderators control what is shared in the forum" | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_4 | 3.5 |
| 3.5 | “There are personal experiences I want to share in the forum, but I don’t because I think they may be removed by staff / moderators” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_5 | 3.6 |
| 3.6 | “Staff / moderators tend to respond too slowly” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_6 | 3.7 |
| 3.7 | “Staff / moderators provide the advice and information I need” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_7 | 3.8 |
| 3.8 | “Staff / moderators help me to explore my problems” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_8 | 3.9 |
| 3.9 | “Staff / moderators generally make responses that are constructive and helpful” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_9 | 3.10 |
| 3.10 | “Staff / moderators sometimes leave users feeling ignored or misunderstood” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_10 | 3.11 |
| 3.11 | “Staff / moderators respond quickly when there is a problem, for example when someone breaks the rules or is very upset.” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_11 | 3.12 |
| 3.12 | “Staff / moderators on this forum are generally warm**”** | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_12 | 3.13 |
| 3.13 | “Staff / moderators on this forum generally show empathy” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  2 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mod\_13 | 3.14 |
| 3.14 | “When I post to the forum, I usually get responses from users rather than staff / moderators” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree”  **5 “Not applicable to me as I don’t post”** | t1\_mod\_14 | 3.15 |
| 3.15 | “When I post to the forum, I prefer responses from other users rather than staff / moderators” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree”  **5 “Not applicable to me as I don’t post”** | t1\_mod\_15 | 4.0 |
| **4.0** | “**In this section we’d like to ask you about your mental health.**  We’d like to start by asking you about how you’ve been feeling in general. The questions in this section are focussed on how you’ve been over the last TWO weeks.  In the **last two weeks**, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?” |  |  | 4.1 |
| 4.1 | “Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_1 | 4.2 |
| 4.2 | “Not being able to stop or control worrying?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_2 | 4.3 |
| 4.3 | “Worrying too much about different things?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_3 | 4.4 |
| 4.4 | “Having trouble relaxing?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_4 | 4.5 |
| 4.5 | “Being so restless that it is hard to sit still?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_5 | 4.6 |
| 4.6 | “Becoming easily annoyed or irritable?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_6 | 4.7 |
| 4.7 | “Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_gad7\_7 | 4.8 |
| 4.8 | “Having little interest or pleasure in doing things?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_1 | 4.9 |
| 4.9 | “Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_2 | 4.10 |
| 4.10 | “Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_3 | 4.11 |
| 4.11 | “Feeling tired or having little energy?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_4 | 4.12 |
| 4.12 | “Having a poor appetite or overeating?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_5 | 4.13 |
| 4.13 | “Feeling bad about yourself, or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_6 | 4.14 |
| 4.14 | “Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_7 | 4.15 |
| 4.15 | “Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite - being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual?” | 0 “Not at all”  1 “Several days”  2 “More than half the days”  3 “Nearly every day” | t1\_phq8\_8 | 4.16 |
| 4.16 | "Overall, how are you feeling in comparison to two weeks ago?" | 0 "I feel a lot worse"  1 "I feel slightly worse"  2 "I feel about the same"  3 "I feel slightly better"  4 "I feel a lot better" | t1\_mh\_grc | 4.17 |
| 4.17 | “Now we’d like to ask you a few questions about how you feel about particular things in your life, such as your family and your forum use  The time frame for these questions is again about how you’ve been feeling over the last two weeks” |  |  | 4.18 |
| 4.18 | “I feel like a burden on my friends and family” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_burden\_1 | 4.19 |
| 4.19 | “I feel like a burden on other people in this forum " | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_burden\_2 | 4.20 |
| 4.20 | “I feel inferior to other people because of my mental health” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_inferior | 4.21 |
| 4.21 | “The forum has given me confidence to seek help for my mental health” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree”  **5 “Not applicable to me”** | t1\_mh\_seek | 4.22 |
| 4.22 | “I am confident that I can do things to manage any future mental health difficulties” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_man | 4.23 |
| 4.23 | “I feel that I have been able to take charge of my life” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_life\_1 | 4.24 |
| 4.24 | “I feel that I have been able to actively engage with life” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_mh\_life\_2 | 5.0 |
| **5.0** | **“The next section is about how safe you feel when using the forum”** |  |  | 5.1 |
| 5.1 | “I understand clearly how this forum works“ | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_1 | 5.2 |
| 5.2 | “I have felt distressed by some of the posts I have read on this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_2 | 5.3 |
| 5.3 | “I feel like an outsider in this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_3 | 5.4 |
| 5.4 | “I can trust people on this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_4 | 5.5 |
| 5.5 | “I feel welcome in this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_5 | 5.6 |
| 5.6 | “I feel safe to post about my personal experiences in this forum” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_6 | 5.7 |
| 5.7 | “I feel safe to say anything in this forum because no-one knows who I am” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_7 | 5.8 |
| 5.8 | “Talking about my mental health experiences in the forum might make me feel worse” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_8 | 5.9 |
| 5.9 | “I worry that my posts might cause distress to people who read them” | 0 “Strongly disagree”  1 “Disagree”  2 “Neither agree nor disagree”  3 “Agree”  4 “Strongly agree” | t1\_safe\_9 | 6.0 |
| 6.0 | **“In the next section we would like to ask about your NHS healthcare use relating to your mental health. ”**  (We are interested in the number of separate interactions you have had with NHS services. For example, a visit to the GP and a week’s hospital admission would count as one use each, and so you would record a “1” for each. Please put “0” (I.e. zero) if you did not use a service. Please do not include any services for which you paid privately.”  How many times have you used the following **NHS** services over the **last six weeks** because of your **mental health**? | 1, Accident and Emergency Department  2, Emergency hospital admission (involving an overnight stay)  3, Planned hospital admission (involving an overnight stay)  4, Mental Health Professional appointment (Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Community Mental Health Nurse, etc.)  5, Crisis team or home treatment team visits  6, General Practice (appointment with a GP, nurse, etc.)  7, NHS 111 phoneline  8, None of the above |  | 6.1 |
| 6.1 | “Visit to the Accident and Emergency department” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list:  1, “1  2, “2  3, “3  4, “4  5, “5  6, “6  7, “7  8, “8  9, “9  10, “10  11, “11 or more”  12, prefer not to say | t1\_he\_use\_1  t1\_he\_use\_1num | 6.2 |
| 6.2 | “Emergency hospital admission (involving an overnight stay)” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above | t1\_he\_use\_2  t1\_he\_use\_2num | 6.3 |
| 6.3 | “Planned hospital admission (involving an overnight stay)” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above | t1\_he\_use\_3  t1\_he\_use\_3num | 6.4 |
| 6.4 | “Mental Health Professional appointment (Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Community Mental Health Nurse, etc.)” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above | t1\_he\_use\_4  t1\_he\_use\_4num | 6.5 |
| 6.5 | “Crisis team or home treatment team visits” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above  Select NUMBER | t1\_he\_use\_5  t1\_he\_use\_5num | 6.6 |
| 6.6 | “General Practice (appointment with a GP, nurse, etc.)” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above | t1\_he\_use\_6  t1\_he\_use\_6num | 6.7 |
| 6.7 | “NHS 111 phoneline” | 0 = Never, 1 = At least once  Select from a dropdown list as above | t1\_he\_use\_7  t1\_he\_use\_7num | 6.71 |
| 6.71 | “None of the above” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_use\_8 | 6.8 |
| 6.8 | “Have you taken any prescription medication for your mental health over the **last six weeks**?    Please only answer in relation to medication prescribed for you by a health professional” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes”  2 “Prefer not to say” | t1\_he\_med | 6.9 |
| 6.9 | “Over the last six weeks I’ve found it hard to access in-person mental health support” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_ip\_1 | If No, 6.11  If Yes, 6.10 |
| 6.10 | “If yes, the main reason is because…” | 0 “It is not available in my area”  1 “It is only available at certain times that don’t work for me”  2 “There is a long waiting list”  3 “I don’t want people to know I need help with my mental health”  4 “Some other reason (please write in) | t1\_he\_ip\_2  t1\_he\_ip\_2\_text (Free text input) | 6.10a |
| 6.10a | “Have you used any of the following community or charity groups or services to seek support for your mental health and/or to support others, over **the last six weeks**?    Please select all that apply” |  |  | 6.11 |
| 6.11 | “Peer support group (in person)” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_1 | 6.12 |
| 6.12 | “Peer support group (online in real time (video or audio))” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_2 | 6.13 |
| 6.13 | “Peer support chat room or online forum” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_3 | 6.14 |
| 6.14 | “Online information pages or toolkits for mental health support” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_4 | 6.15 |
| 6.15 | “Community group  (e.g. exercise class, social group, etc.)” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_5 | 6.16 |
| 6.16 | “Charity or third-sector support services (e.g. MIND)” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_6 | 6.17 |
| 6.17 | None of the above | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_comm\_1\_0 | 6.18 |
| 6.18 | How frequently have you spent time seeking support on the internet in the last 6 weeks, including visiting online forums (including the forum that led you here)? | 0 “Never”  1 “A few times, but less than every week”  2 “Once a week or more, but less than every day” 3 “Every day” | t1\_he\_comm\_2 | 6.19 |
| 6.19 | “Have you paid privately for any of the following services to support your mental health over the last six weeks?    Please include anything that you paid for yourself privately out-of-pocket or through private health insurance” |  |  | 6.20 |
| 6.20 | “Private psychiatrist” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_1 | 6.21 |
| 6.21 | “Private hospital or clinic” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_2 | 6.22 |
| 6.22 | “Any other private therapist” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_3 | 6.23 |
| 6.23 | “Complementary or alternative therapies (e.g. acupuncture, hypnotherapy, etc.)” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_4 | 6.24 |
| 6.24 | “Over the counter (without prescription) medication, remedies or treatments” | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_5 | 6.25 |
| 6.25 | Subscription for online mental health support (e.g. Headspace) | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_6 | 6.26 |
| 6.26 | None of the above | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_he\_pri\_1\_0 | 6.27 |
| 6.27 | As a result of using this forum I am | 1, “More likely to visit my GP to discuss my mental health”  2, “Less likely to visit my GP to discuss my mental health”  3, “No more or less likely to visit my GP to discuss my mental health” | t1\_he\_ei\_1 | 6.28 |
| 6.28 | As a result of this forum I am | 1, “More likely to take medication for my mental health”  2, “Less likely to take medication for my mental health”  3, “No more or less likely to take medication for my mental health” | t1\_he\_ei\_2 | 7.0 |
| **7.0** | **“In this final section of the survey we are going to ask you a few questions about yourself.**  This information will really help us understand how the forum is experienced differently for different people.**”** |  |  | 10.1 |
| 7.1 | “What is your gender? (Select one)” | 0 “female”  1 “male”  2 “non-binary”  3 “prefer not to say”  4 “prefer to self-describe (please write in)” | t1\_dem\_gen  t1\_dem\_gen\_text (Free text input) | 10.2 |
| 7.2 | “What is your age group? (Select one)” | 0 “16 – 24”  1 “25 – 34”  2 “35 – 44”  3 “45 – 54”  4 “55 -- 64”  5 “65 and over”  6 “prefer not to say” | t1\_dem\_age | 7.3 |
| 7.3 | “How would you describe your ethnicity? (Select one)” | 0 “White”  1 “Black”  2 “Asian”  3 “Mixed”  4 “prefer not to say”  5 “prefer to self-describe (please write in)” | t1\_dem\_eth  t1\_dem\_eth\_text (Free text input) | 7.4 |
| 7.4 | “Some things about the area where you live can be important for the challenges and difficulties you face day-to-day. For example, how urban or rural it is, and what NHS services are available nearby.  We can find out about this if you let us know the first part of your postcode. We don’t want to know your full address, just the part of your postcode before the final letters.  For example, if your postcode was LA1 4YfrW, you’d input LA1 and 4” | “I’d prefer not to disclose this”  (0 = disagree and proceed to disclose postcode, 1 = agree not to disclose) | **NOT IN PUBLIC DATAFILE:**  t1\_dem\_postcode  t1\_dem\_postcode\_text  (Free text input) | 7.4 |
| 7.5 | I consent to being invited to take part in an interview by email | 0 “No”  1 “Yes” | t1\_interview\_consent |  |
|  | **This is the end of the survey**. Thank you so much for taking part.  This survey is a key part of our research project and it would not be possible without the contribution of people like you.  **If you have any questions about this survey, please email us at** [**ipof.survey@lancaster.ac.uk**](mailto:ipof.survey@lancaster.ac.uk)  If you’d like to know more about the project, you can find out about it here [iPOF web link].  **Thanks again,**  **The iPOF research team”** |  |  | END |

# Additional and Derived variables

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **Variable label** | **Coding** | **Notes** |
| person\_id | "Person id" | Numeric | Unique respondent number in the datafile |
| forum\_codename | "Forum codename" | Discrete: “Chaffinch”, “Dunnock”, “Jay”, “Magpie”, “Robin”, “Sparrow.2”, “Sparrow.8”, “Starling” | This refers to the codename for the forum. Information on the forums involved in the study can be found here: <https://lancaster.ac.uk/ipof/case-summaries> |
| redcap\_survey\_identifier | “redcap\_survey\_identifier” | String/alphanumeric | Unique respondent number in the raw data from the redcap platform |
| t1\_time\_survey\_start | "Date and Time that the survey was begun" | String/alphanumeric:  Year-Month-Day, hour:minute:second |  |
| t1\_duration\_survey\_full | Completion time in seconds for the full survey at t1, including first forum use questions, demographics and permissions | Numeric | Responses with completion times of less than 300s (5 min) for t1 have been removed from the dataset. |
| t1\_duration\_survey\_full\_minutes | As above, in minutes | Numeric |  |
| t1\_duration\_survey\_t123 | Completion time in seconds just the parts of the survey repeated across t1, t2, and t3. | Numeric | Use this variable to compare completion time across survey waves. |
| t1\_duration\_survey\_t123\_minutes | As above, in minutes | Numeric |  |
| t1\_gad7\_sum | Sum of GAD7 items | Numeric, 0-7 |  |
| t1\_gad7\_mean | Mean of GAD7 items | Numeric, 0-3 |  |
| t1\_phq8\_sum | Sum of PHQ8 items | Numeric, 0-7 |  |
| t1\_phq8\_mean | Mean of PHQ8 items | Numeric, 0-3 |  |

# Variables to identify potential bad actors or inattentive respondents

The following variables are designed to flag factors that **may** indicate fraudulent or inattentive responding.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **Variable label** | **Coding** | **Notes** |
| t1\_LateNight\_Flag3 | "Survey started between 12 and 6am" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag3  Bot attacks may be scheduled for times when monitoring of the target system is likely to be weak.  It may also be that some genuine responders are night owls. |
| t1\_PostcodeIdentical\_Flag5 | "Postcode is identical to another respondent" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag5  Although (partial) postcodes matching may of course be innocently due to people living in the same area (especially for the Sparrow forums as they are geographically based), it may also indicate someone making multiple responses. |
| t1\_TimeIdentical\_Flag6 | "Completion time is identical to another" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag6  May indicate repeat responding. |
| t1\_InconsistentAlone\_Flag10 | “Response Inconsistency to 'alone' forum help questions” | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Responses are maximally inconsistent to questions:  Q4.3 “you feel…more alone”  Q4.4 “you feel…less isolated”  This response pattern is consistent with “straight lining”, where the respondent is selecting the same response option for all questions on a page.  May indicate inattentive responding. |
| t1\_InconsistentWelcome\_Flag11 | “Response inconsistency to 'welcome' psy-safety questions” | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Responses are maximally inconsistent to questions:  Q7.3 “Feel like an outsider on forum”  Q7.5 “Feel welcome on forum”.  This response pattern is consistent with “straight lining”, where the respondent is selecting the same response option for all questions on a page.  May indicate inattentive responding. |
| t1\_StraightLineMH\_Flag12 | “Straight-lining across MH items” | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | The responses to the Mental Health questions (t1\_mh\_burden\_1", "t1\_mh\_burden\_2", "t1\_mh\_inferior", "t1\_mh\_seek", "t1\_mh\_man",  "t1\_mh\_life\_1", "t1\_mh\_life\_2) have zero variance, despite the questions having a mixture of response valences, i.e. indicating good (“life”) and poor (“burden”) mental health.    May indicate inattentive responding. |
| t1\_CompletionFast\_Flag13 | "Completion time < 6 minutes" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Completion time < 6 minutes is in the lower 10% of completion times.  May indicated inattentive responding. |
| t1\_CompletionSlow\_Flag14 | "Completion time >= 45 minutes" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Completion time >= 45 minutes is in the upper 3% of completion times.  May indicate inattentive responding. |
| t1\_InconsistentPost\_Flag15 | "Inconsistent responding to “post” questions" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Variables “t1\_mod\_13” and “t1\_mod\_14” ask about posting. Respondents have the option to respond “not applicable to me as I don’t post”. Consistent responses to these questions should both be “I don’t post” as above, or both **not** this response.  May indicate inattentive responding. |
| t1\_Flagtotal | "Total of flags" | Numeric, 0-8 (although there are 9 flags above, the completion-time flags are mutually exclusive and cannot both be true) | The larger the number, the more of the flag conditions above are met. |

# Variables that were used to exclude cases from this dataset

The following conditions were used to exclude respondents that were considered to be acting in bad faith:  
(These variables do not exist in the dataset released for analysis, as they all have the value of zero for non-excluded respondents.)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **Variable label** | **Coding** | **Notes** |
| EmailDomain\_Flag1 | "Email domain flagged as used for abuse by IPQS" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag1  The following email domains are associated with fraud by IPQS (cybersecurity company: <https://www.ipqualityscore.com/>)  “Tupanda”, “seosnaps”, “tospage”, “rohoza”, “fkcod”, “fahih”, “laymro”, “oprevolt”  Considered to indicate fraudulent responding.  Respondents with email addresses from these domains were excluded from further analysis. |
| EmailDist4\_flag9 | "The minimum "edit distance" to another email is <=4 characters" | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag9  Edit distance is the number of character changes/deletions one would have to make to convert one string of characters to another. In the context of email, a small edit distance may indicate bad actors using variations on a theme to submit multiple responses, e.g.  minimoose71@gmail.com, minimoose71+1@gmail.com.  This flag identifies responses where the minimum edit distance to any other email is 4 or less.  Considered to indicate repeat responding.  Respondents with email addresses with this characteristic were excluded from further analysis. |
| EmailPattern\_Flag16 | “Email address pattern is suspicious” | Dummy coded (1=yes, 0=no) | Flag16  The first part of a user’s email address conforms to a regular pattern observed across several hundred responses. The pattern is:  1 upper-case letter, 3-12 lower-case letters, 1 upper-case letter, 3-12 lower-case letters, 2 digits.  This pattern reflected seemingly random selections of names reflecting Anglo-Saxon heritage of the form Firstname\_initial\_Lastname\_initial@, e.g.:  BrianxPetermanf@.  A second pattern was included to also catch “Mc” surnames, e.g. "AnguspMcScottishq@"  Considered to indicate repeat responding.  Respondents with email addresses with this characteristic were excluded from further analysis. |