

Ageing Mind Initiative Newsletter

www.uq.edu.au/ami



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**Please direct all enquiries
to ami@uq.edu.au**

Welcome to the Autumn 2010 AMI Newsletter!

It has been a crazy couple of months since the last AMI Newsletter. The big event on the calendar just passed was the Positive Ageing Series that went ahead as part of the UQ Centenary Day celebrations on Sunday 18th April, 2010. Hundreds of eager academics, students and members of the community flocked together to listen to the latest research on a variety of topics.

The Delta Society talked about the benefits of pet therapy, Theresa Scott discussed the benefits of horticultural therapy (see pg 4), James Kirby highlighted the joys of being a grandparent and Emmaline Falconer discussed the highs and lows of driving in later life. The School of Human Movement Studies also inspired us with the motto "if you can walk you can dance" and demonstrated a range of beneficial exercises to improve physical functioning. Perhaps the highlight of the day was Celebrity Chef Glen Barratt and Dietician Dr Olivia Wright who demonstrated how to cook delicious and healthy meals that both inspire your mind and fuel your body. Further details from the event can be found online at www.uq.edu.au/ami

Following the success of the Positive Ageing Series we have had a flood of excited potential participants sign up to the 50+ registry. We are so delighted to have all of you on board. In fact, we would like to take a moment to welcome all of our new members and also to thank ongoing members who have helped make all of our ageing research possible. Your motivation and dedication continue to inspire us.

Phobias—Help is at Hand



- Nancy Pachana

Phobias are very common in people of all ages. The word *phobia* refers to an intense and persistent fear or dislike of certain situations, activities, objects, animals, or people. Very often people who suffer from these fears understand that there is no rational reason to be afraid of the object or situation, in that it does not pose a great threat, yet their fears remain.

Most people know the names of some of the most common phobias – *arachnophobia* is fear of spiders, and *claustrophobia* is the fear of enclosed spaces, while *acrophobia* is a fear of heights. There are also some more unusual fears, with equally unusual names. *Bufofobia* is the fear of toads, *ornithophobia* is the fear of birds, and *thalassophobia* refers to fear of the sea.

Usually, people cope with such fears by avoiding the situation or object. And very often this is relatively easy to do, especially for uncommon objects or animals which can be easily avoided. Unfortunately this only serves to reinforce the fear, since avoiding the situation brings a feeling of instant relief. Every time someone afraid of elevators chooses at the last moment to take the stairs instead, then that instance sense of relief at the choice makes it that much harder to choose the elevator next time.

Fortunately, phobias are one of the single most straight-forward sources of anxiety to treat. The usual treatment consists of education about fears and phobias, learning relaxation exercises, and then practicing these in the presence of the feared object.

Get Involved in the Research!

The School of Psychology at the University of Queensland is looking for people aged 60 and above with phobias to take part in a research study involving fear and phobias.

Participation will involve some laboratory measures of fear and arousal and taking part in a small group treatment to overcome the phobia.

We unfortunately cannot treat people with a blood or injection phobia at this time, but other fears, particularly to animals or insects, are especially sought.

For more information on this study, or to volunteer for participation, please contact **Melissa** on **3878 2236** or **0438 240973**.



Positive Ageing Journey 2010

Positive Ageing Journey 2010

Following the success of the 2009 Positive Ageing Journey (PAJ), this popular community event will be running for a second time.

The PAJ is a day when members of the community, clinical and academic experts offer their experiences and insights about extending independent living, managing finances, keeping your brain healthy and active and exploring your creative side. The program includes a diverse range of topics focused on enhancing social, mental and functional health and well-being.

Date: Friday 17th September, 2010

Time: 8am—5pm

Where: Bardon Conference Centre
390 Simpsons Rd, Bardon, QLD. 4065

Coast: \$30 for Seniors/Health Card, \$40 for others

Places are limited so get in fast!

PAJ Cocktail Party 2010

Join LifeTec the night before the PAJ for a night of interesting and fun networking. Drinks and nibbles will be provided as LifeTec highlights the *Smart Home Demonstrator*. This replica home environment features assistive technology solutions built into the living, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom areas.

The Demonstrator will enable people to see first-hand how different items can assist in improving independence and safety in the home, helping people remain in their homes for longer.

Date: Thursday 16th September, 2010

Time: 6:30pm—8pm

Where: LifeTec Queensland, Level 1
Cnr Newmarket & Enoggera Rd, Newmarket

Coast: \$10

Contact Nazli Barootian (07) 333 444 60 or
NBarootian@eventcorp.com.au for information

Get Involved in UQ Ageing Research

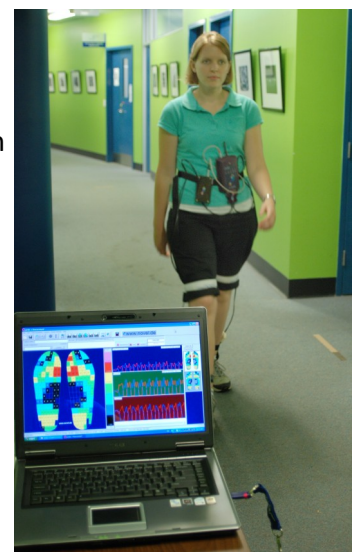
Foot Pain and Function in Healthy Adults

Foot problems can be related to disability and an increased risk of falls in older adults. A study in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (Physiotherapy) at The University of Queensland is currently investigating foot pain and function in healthy adults with no foot problems. Results from this study will be used to compare foot pain and functional limitations in people with healthy feet compared to people with a hallux valgus deformity (bunions).

Healthy female volunteers aged 50 to 75 years are required. To be eligible for this study, you must have no foot problems and no previous history of foot or ankle surgery or fractures.

Participation involves a single testing session at UQ St Lucia Campus, which takes approximately 2 hours and includes a foot assessment by a qualified Podiatrist, balance testing, and muscle strength, flexibility and walking tests. A short follow-up appointment will also be arranged for foot x-rays at a radiography clinic (Toowong). Free parking is available at both locations.

People interested in participating in this research project should contact Sheree Nix for more information.





Get Involved in UQ Ageing Research

Seeking participants for a study about gardens and gardening activities

Gardening as a therapy, has a history dating back to the Middle Ages. Recent research has examined the role of gardening as a rehabilitative therapy for a wide range of people. According to Biophilia theory, we are not only genetically programmed to respond positively to natural environments, our emotional, intellectual and physical well-being depends upon having access to nature. We are interested in exploring the importance of the home garden in the lives of community dwelling older adults.

We invite you to participate in this research if you have any interest in gardens and gardening activities. Participation involves completing a questionnaire about your involvement in, and feelings about, gardens. The questionnaire can either be posted to you, with a return-addressed, stamped envelope or completed online at http://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV_2owLkVGZQiqcWyg&SVID=Prod.



If you would like to participate in this study, or you would like some more information, please contact **Theresa Scott** t.scott@psy.uq.edu.au
Phone: **07 3346 7284 / 0430 731 227**

Interested in Neck Pain?

Women and men 65 years and older with and without neck pain are required for a study on the neck's effects on balance, eye and head movement control.

If any of your family members or friends would be interested please contact the Neck Research Unit and leave a message (phone: 33654568).

A member of the research group will then contact you. Alternatively you can email j.treleaven@uq.edu.au.

Out of hours testing and parking close to the unit will also be available.

Physiotherapy Diagnosis of Lower Back Pain

The purpose of the study is to investigate ways to improve the assessment of low back pain, in order to better guide treatment selection.

Participants will be asked to attend a clinical and laboratory assessment of their low back pain. The tests can either be attended in two sessions (1 ½ hour each), or one session (3 hours total). A series of assessments will examine your movement, trunk balance, deep trunk muscle activity, and sensation through non-invasive methods. Several questionnaires are administered, and an interview conducted to help us better understand how your low back pain is affecting you. Your ongoing treatment for your low back pain will not be interrupted.

Please contact Nick Karayannis if you are interested in participating questions.
Email: n.karayannis@uq.edu.au | Telephone: **07 3346 7468**





Get Involved in UQ Ageing Research

Mapping the Brain Mechanisms of Naming Treatment Post-Stroke

The aim of this research is to find out what areas of the brain are used when people who have had a stroke process language, and what areas of the brain are influenced by different types of naming therapy. Patterns of brain activity in healthy adults will be compared to that in people who have had a stroke.

We are seeking adults over 40 years of age who are right handed, have English as a primary language, no history of neurological disease, mental illness, head trauma, alcoholism, cerebral tumour or abscess, and have no metals present in the body which are not safe in an MRI scanner.

Participation in the research will involve one brainwave recording (EEG), as well as one brain scan (MRI) while you do some language tasks such as name objects or pressing a button in response to words. You will receive \$30 as a reimbursement for your time and travel. Participation in this project is expected to take between 4-6hrs over 3-4 weeks.

Contact Sophia van Hees, to find out more details about the study on **(07)3346 6110** or **0422 135518** or s.vanhees@uq.edu.au



Help researchers find a cure for Tennis Elbow

Participation in this study involves one 45 -70 minute testing session at the University of Queensland, St Lucia.

We are looking for healthy volunteers aged 40 - 70 with:
No neck or arm pain within the past 12 months
No history of tennis elbow (pain on the outer elbow)

As a token of thanks all participants will receive their results from the tests and a **movie voucher!**



Your results will be compared with patients with tennis elbow to help determine effective treatments for this condition. Your assistance in our research is greatly appreciated.

If you are interested, please phone Brooke on **3365 4692** or email b.coombes@uq.edu.au

Aesthetic Appeal of Assistive Technology

With an ageing population and ongoing stress on government funded health care systems, the concept of a person 'ageing in place' i.e. remaining in their home as they age, is growing in popularity.

This study explores what affect product appearance has on consumer purchases of assistive technology (such as a grab rail) and the cost the consumer is prepared to apply to the purchase.

Research participants will be presented with six grab rails (one at a time) and asked to rate each grab rail presented on how appealing it is to them.

Findings from the research may influence a move towards developing and producing more aesthetically pleasing assistive technology.

For more information, contact Steve Larkin stephen.larkin@uqconnect.edu.au





Get Involved in UQ Ageing Research

Home-based Music Therapy for spousal carers and people with dementia

Music Therapy can assist people with dementia to recall special memories and events, which can be used to improve meaningful communication and interaction with other people, including with the spouse caregiver. Music can also affect mood and facilitate the release of tension and stress which may lead to decreased feelings of caregiver burden, anxiety and/or depression.

We invite members of the community to participate in a home-based music program that explores quality of life and well-being of couples when one partner has dementia. We will show you how to choose music strategically to facilitate couple interaction, enjoyment and relaxation. The project runs for six weeks and is delivered in your home. Participation in this project is **free**.

For more information on being a part of this project, please contact: Dr Felicity Baker on (07) 3365 3740 or email f.baker1@uq.edu.au

Helping Stroke Patients to Speak

This study is looking at the role of attention in language, so that we may develop a treatment for adults who have aphasia. Aphasia is caused by head trauma, most commonly by stroke, and can result in difficulties in all aspects of language, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. We know that attention plays a significant role in all aspects of language in healthy adults.

We are seeking adults over the age of 40 who are right handed, have no neurological disorders, have no history of drug or alcohol abuse, do not have uncorrected visual or hearing impairments and have English as a first language.

We will ask you to undertake a number of language and attention tests which will include picture naming, picture descriptions and counting tones. Participants will also perform tasks while we record the electrical activity in your brain using electroencephalography (EEG).

If you are interested in this study, please contact Carole-Ann Greig, email: c.greig@uq.edu.au, telephone: 07 3346 6110, mobile: 0405 308189

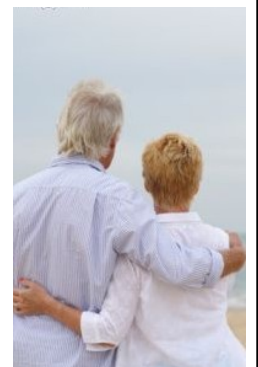
Memory and Communication Training in Dementia Study.

Do you care for someone with Dementia? We are looking for people with dementia and their caregivers, who are living together in the community.

Dementia can affect a person's language and memory, and this can have an impact for both the person with dementia and their caregivers. We are currently trialling a home-based caregiver training program, that is designed to help caregivers support memory and communication of people with dementia.

You will be asked to take part in two (2 hour) assessment sessions separated by three months. The assessment sessions can take place in your home and will involve completing questionnaires about mood and behaviour, some memory and language tasks, and two every-day activities. Caregivers will also receive the DVD based training package that provides them with strategies to help maximise communication and every-day memory function for the person with dementia. We can provide a DVD player if you do not have one!

People who live in the Greater Brisbane, Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast areas interested in talking part (or more information) should contact Erin Smith or Megan Broughton, on 3346 7451 or email e.smith1@uq.edu.au /





Get Involved in UQ Ageing Research

Palliative Approaches to Improve Care

It is important for health professionals who have worked in residential aged care facilities to receive feedback from the families of the deceased that they cared for.

Participation in this project involves the completion of a survey which has been designed to understand perceptions of how your relative was cared for in a residential facility. The questionnaires will be by mailed and a stamped self addressed envelope will be included for returning the survey. The survey takes approximately 30 minutes.

This study is appropriate for individuals who have had a family member die during 2009, who were cared for in a residential aged care facility for at least one month prior to their death.

Contact Deborah Parker on 07 33773310 or email deborah.parker@uq.edu.au



Hearing and Language Outcomes for Cochlear Implants

The aim of this research is to understand the factors that are important for successful outcomes of cochlear implantation in adults.

Cochlear implant success is likely to be impacted by the development and functioning of 'attentional control', which refers to a person's ability to selectively attend to some stimuli (such as a relevant sound or visual event) while ignoring irrelevant stimuli. In this study, attentional control will be compared between adults using a cochlear implant and normal-hearing individuals.

We are looking to recruit adults (18 to 70 yrs) with normal hearing. Participants will have their brain activity recorded using an EEG, a safe and painless instrument. Testing will take approximately 2 hours.

Contact Krystal Baguley (Ph: 0403 059529, Email: krystal.baguley@uqconnect.edu.au) or Dr Jill Harris (Ph: 0406 008 354, Email: jill.harris@uq.edu.au).

Attitudes towards older adults

Attitudes have been shown to effect memory, emotional health, physical functioning , diet and exercise. The difference between having a positive attitude, as opposed to a negative attitude , can be greater than you think!

We need your help to better understand the attitudes of older adults towards themselves and the ageing process. By assisting in this study you will help develop an Australian specific measure that will advance research with Australian populations and Australian older adults.

For more information please contact **Matthew Taylor** at attitudes.to.ageing@gmail.com

Reactions to Feared Objects

Researchers at UQ, School of Psychology are running a study investigating the responses of mentally healthy men and women aged 60 and over to common feared objects such as spiders.

Participants will complete some questionnaires and perform some reaction tasks on a computer while their physiology measures such as a EMG, skin conductance and respiratory rate are taken. The entire experiment will take 1.5 hours to complete. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

For more information contact Shuyang Chen on 0413 426 791 or shu.chen@uqconnect.edu.au



Have you stopped driving? Or you will need to stop soon?

We are interested in speaking with people who have stopped driving or who will need to stop due to memory problems/ dementia.

We are also interested in speaking with **carers** who have been involved in the process of helping a family member with dementia with driving or stopping driving.

The project is being run by the Division of Occupational Therapy at the University of Queensland
We would like to hear about **your experiences** and the experiences of your family members.

For more information contact Jacki Liddle on **0422 223 527** or **3346 7454** (and leave a message if she is not available- she will ring you back) Or email j.liddle@uq.edu.au

Family History of Cardiovascular Disease?

The Cardiovascular Imaging Research Centre of UQ (CIRCUS) is looking for people with a family history of early cardiovascular disease to take part in research.

We are looking for men and women between 40 and 60 years of age who have a sibling or parent who was diagnosed with cardiovascular disease before 60yrs.

Participants must be willing to undergo a short nurse-managed imaging test, a lifestyle management program (including taking cholesterol lowering medications where indicated), blood tests and a questionnaire. Travel to the Princess Alexandra Hospital will also be required.

To learn more please contact Julie Holiday on **(07) 3240 6146** or **0466136978**. Alternatively you can email j.holliday@uq.edu.au

Help us improve treatment for Cardiovascular Disease!

UQ trialling better way to measure blood pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) affects nearly 30 percent of the Australian population. This study aims to help guide treatment decisions in the management of patients with hypertension by measuring central blood pressure. The new technology to be trialled involves the measurement of central blood pressure by recording the pulse at the wrist. This is a quick and non invasive test and the information gained is expected to improve the care of people receiving medication for high blood pressure.

Participants will be asked to:

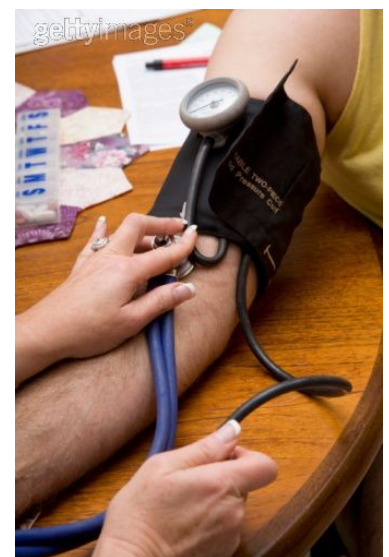
- Attend the Princess Alexandra Hospital every 3 months over a 12 month s
- Give 2 blood and urine samples, undergo a echocardiogram, have brachial and central blood pressure monitoring and complete quality of life surveys

Participants (as well as their doctors) will receive all clinical information!

We are looking for volunteers who are:

- Between 18 and 75 years
- Have been diagnosed with high blood pressure
- Are taking at least **one**, but **no more than three**, medications for high blood pressure

If you are interested, please contact Deborah Gilroy at d.gilroy@uq.edu.au or **07 3176 6614** Or Leah Wright Telephone 07 3176 7814



For additional information or to be added to the AMI mailing list and Listserv, please contact us via email at ami@uq.edu.au. Alternatively you may contact Dr Nancy Pachana at School of Psychology, The University of Queensland, ST LUCIA QLD 4072 or Tel. 07-3365-6832