

# Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 45, November 2020 Newsletter  
<https://ami.group.uq.edu.au/>

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The year 2020 has been both interesting and challenging. Reflecting on the year, the February edition was focused on the Australian Bushfires and the May edition was focused on the Coronavirus Pandemic reflecting the turbulent times we have experienced. We have seen a large volume of research projects temporarily suspend participant recruitment as a result of these challenges and we have also seen the booming return of ageing-related research as evidenced by this month's edition.

AMI also has some very exciting news to announce in that the University of Queensland has officially become the first university in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere to join the global Age Friendly University Network. You can read more about this significant milestone on page 2. It is wonderful to end the year on this high note.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support and feedback. Happy Holidays!



## ISSUE QUOTE:

"Wonder is the beginning of wisdom."  
~ Socrates

## Feature Article

### UQ Joins the Age Friendly University Network!

The University of Queensland (UQ) achieved a significant milestone this year by officially becoming the first university in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere to join the global Age Friendly University Network. This Network is recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as part of its "[Age Friendly World](#)" initiative. The recognition is particularly timely as the WHO have designated 2020-2030 to be the [Decade of Healthy Aging](#).

UQ already has strong leadership in the Healthy Ageing space from the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences. This designation brings together the rest of the university under an umbrella initiative to guide formulation of policies and practices that will make UQ a preferred university for mature-aged students, and will amplify its considerable research and engagement in terms of healthy, positive ageing activities.

Professor Pachana led the application process with strong support from the Vice-Chancellor's office. When asked why it is important, she responded "It is critical that universities address the needs of older people, because we need good science and empirical evidence to guide us in solving big issues associated with ageing - including such topical issues as reducing ageism in society, improving residential aged care services, and providing strategies for healthy, positive ageing to older Australians irrespective of context or location. I believe that universities serve an important role in society, not only educating the next generation of researchers, practitioners and citizens, but also serving the needs, goals and aspirations of our society. Older adults are a vital component of our community; understanding how to make life better for all of us as we grow older is timely and important."

UQ will build on its existing models of age-friendly practice across five areas:

1. World-class research on key issues impacting older adults, not least UQ's progress on developing a COVID-19 vaccine
2. Accessible, innovative coursework delivered in a range of blended modalities
3. Strong engagement of alumni and external stakeholders, such as Council on the Ageing, to partner with university initiatives, student projects and research programs
4. Respect for diversity and striving to put these values into action - an example would be our initiative to make the UQ Art Museum and UQ Sports "dementia-friendly" spaces
5. Excellence in pairing cutting-edge research with student-led interprofessional clinical practice - the UQ Healthy Living Clinic gives mature-aged members of the community the chance to boost their physical and mental well-being, participating in high quality clinical services as part of the training of the next generation of clinicians

UQ is already part of a robust and highly connected international network of universities that partner to deliver world-class research and teaching initiatives. Some of these, such as Washington University in St Louis, Missouri, are already part of the Age Friendly Network. Pachana states that "our global connections and international perspective are what allow UQ to take advantage of such opportunities and translate them into benefits for our students, our researchers and our community partners."

Through this Network, UQ will help advance the research agenda for healthy ageing for all Australians, and will translate our knowledge into practice to benefit all members of our society. This is crucial work to ensure that health and well-being in later years benefits industry, childhood development, health and economic outlooks - in short, a wealth of interconnected and intergenerational benefits.

## Ageing Well MHPN Series

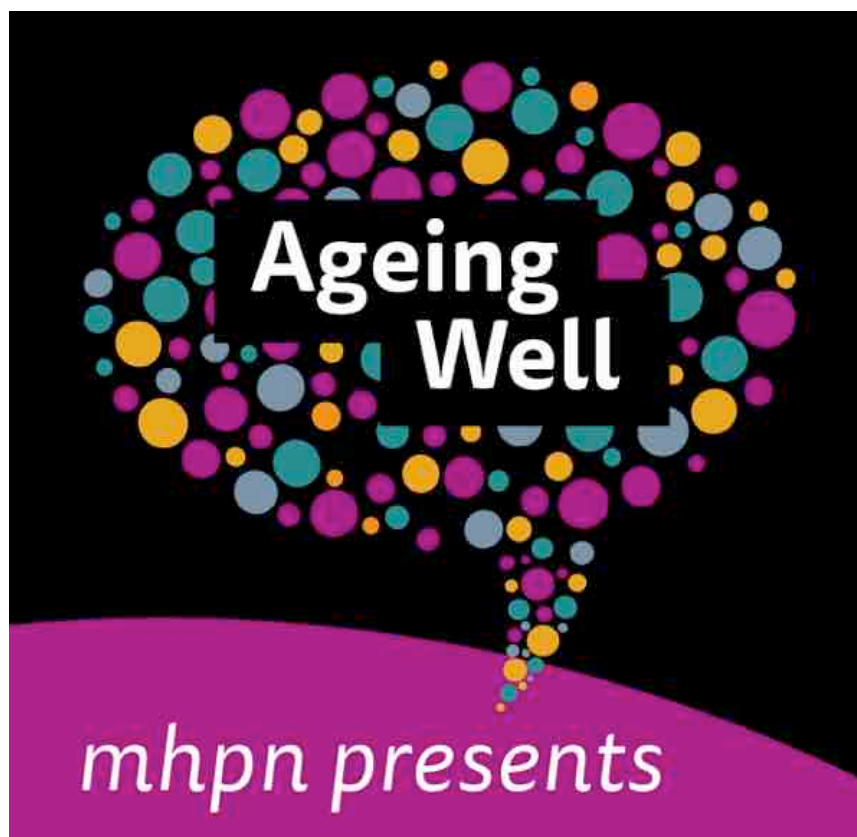
The [Mental Health Professionals' Network](#) (MHPN) aims to improve interdisciplinary and collaborative mental health care practices. MHPN is a unique initiative targeted at improving interdisciplinary mental health practice and collaborative care within Australia. We support primary mental health practitioners through [local networks](#) and our online professional development [webinar program](#).

MHPN presents two podcast series where you can listen to engaging conversations between national and international experts and mental health practitioners, as they reflect on a variety of topics related to mental wellbeing, interdisciplinary practice, and collaborative care.

One of the podcast series is on [Ageing Well](#). Mental wellbeing matters at every stage of our lifespan. In this pilot series, listen to a GP and a mental health social worker reflect on the interdisciplinary and collaborative care practices that can support a fulfilling and transformative ageing process.

With episodes releasing fortnightly from 26 August 2020, our new podcast is a value-add to our online professional development program, and similar to our [webinars](#), episodes are free to access anytime. Episodes are available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and our website.

Follow MHPN #MHPNPresents on: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#)



## Medicare Benefits extended to people in Residential Aged Care.

In the [May 2019](#) edition of AMI we covered an article discussing the urgent need for improved access to psychological services in aged care. The reason was that to date, funding models have not supported treatment by psychologists within residential aged care facilities.

We are very pleased to announce that the Federal Government has finally recognised the need to urgently create Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items to increase the provision of allied health services, including mental health services, to people in aged care during the pandemic.

The Federal Government announced it will immediately accept all recommendations in the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's special report. This includes the removal of barriers to allied health professionals to enter residential aged care facilities.

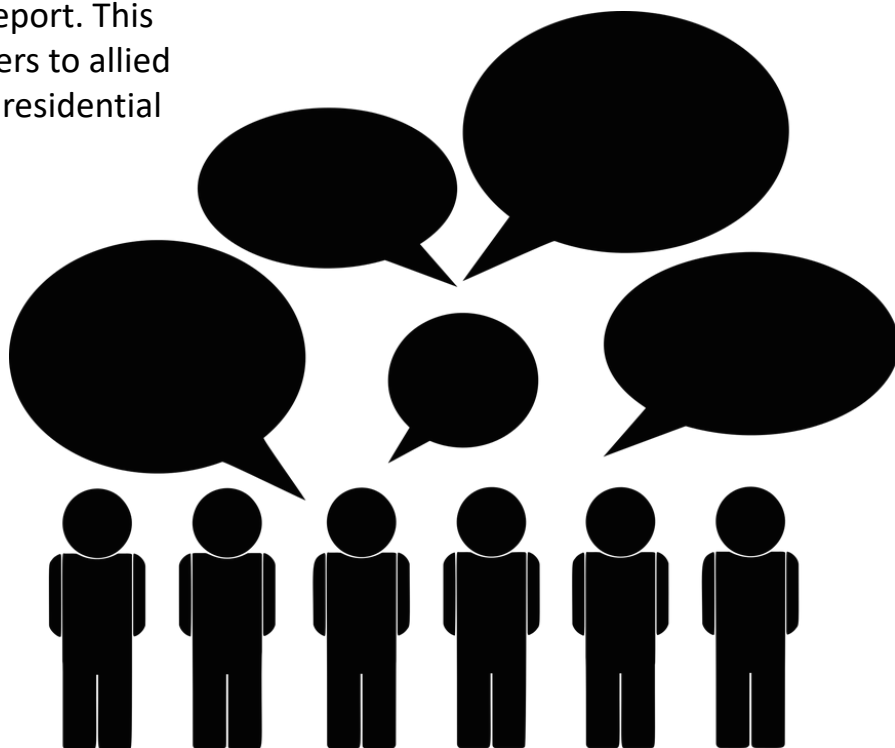
The Australian Psychological Society, which represents Australia's psychologists, and in particular the Psychology and Ageing Interest Group (PAIG), has advocated on this issue for years. PAIG members represented the needs of older Australians in aged care at the recent Royal

Commission which was instrumental in leading towards this positive change.

The Royal Commission's special report states that since March, levels of depression, anxiety, confusion, loneliness and suicide risk among aged care residents have increased. COVID-19 has impacted the elderly in far greater numbers than the rest of the population, with the highest death rate, and the traumatising effects cannot be overstated.

The Commissioners are calling for Government to report to Parliament by 1 December on the implementation of the recommendations.

Click [here](#) to view the full APS press release



## RESEARCH UPDATE:

### Are activity monitors accurate at recording steps in older adults?

#### Investigators

Miss Jacinta I Foster, Mrs. Katrina L. Williams, Dr Barbra H. B. Timmer, Professor Sandra G. Brauer from the University of Queensland, St Lucia, QLD, Australia

#### Project Summary

We conducted a study looking at the accuracy of a popular Garmin activity watch (Vivofit®4) for measuring steps in older adults during different walking tasks. The use of commercially available activity watches is ever increasing. However, the accuracy of these watches is still unclear, particularly in older adults, at slow walking speeds and across indoor and outdoor environments. It is important to include these components to reflect tasks commonly experienced in day-to-day life. 40 adults aged 60 years and over completed our study, which involved a once-off assessment of various walking tasks. These walking tasks included treadmill walking at four speeds (very slow – fast walking), an indoor home environment circuit and an outdoor circuit. Participants wore 3 devices for all tests, the Garmin Vivofit®4, a research-grade gold standard (the ActivPAL3™), and a GoPro to video record their steps.

#### Findings

The Garmin Vivofit®4 activity watch was accurate and comparable to our research-grade device at the three fastest treadmill speeds and the outdoor circuit. However, this was not the case for indoor walking, which showed higher error levels and underestimation of step count.

#### Significance

Wearers can be confident in the accuracy of this popular Garmin activity watch when walking at faster speeds and during outdoor walking challenges. However, wearers should be cautious of their accuracy when worn indoors or when walking at slow speeds.





## RESEARCH UPDATE:



# The Health & Wellbeing of People Caring for an Older Family Member

## Survey findings

Jenny Murfield, Professor Wendy Moyle, Professor Analise O'Donovan

### What we did



Between July and December 2019, we asked family carers of people aged 65 years or older to complete a survey that asked about their psychological health, their ways of coping, and their feelings of compassion and mindfulness. We used standard assessment scales to measure carers' answers, and included free-text comment boxes for carers to describe their experiences in their own words.

### Carers who took part

Carers who took part in the survey were mainly: **female**, aged **60 years** old, **retired** or in **employment**, **primary carers** of a **female parent or partner**, aged **81 years** old, living with **dementia**, **musculoskeletal disorder**, and/or **cardiovascular disease**.



### What we found

#### Survey Questions



141 carers answered all questions.

Carers meeting the thresholds for severe/extremely severe symptoms of psychological distress was considerable: 53% for anxiety, 34% for depression, and 28% for stress.

Higher levels of both self-compassion and dispositional mindfulness were associated with lower levels of psychological distress, and this relationship was mediated by better emotional regulation.

#### Comment Boxes



127 carers wrote 504 comment.

Carers wrote about a lack of self-compassion and compassion from others, and several barriers to carers' openness to receiving compassion were identified.

Carers wrote about both the rewards and challenges of the caregiving role, particularly in terms of psychological distress, and described a range of different healthy and unhealthy ways of coping.

### What this means



- Our findings highlight the importance of providing psychological support to family carers of older adults and suggest that compassion-based approaches could be an appropriate focus of this support.
- Programs that aim to develop carers' self-compassion and mindfulness could be useful in reducing carers' psychological distress by helping to develop ways of managing emotions and reducing stress.

# Current Ageing Research

The following projects are looking for participants. Make a difference in Ageing Research today. Sign up now!

## Would you like to help us create RITA?

**She's a conversation agent (sort of like Siri) who specialises in providing and collecting information on cognitive health. Her purpose is to facilitate timely diagnosis of dementia and related conditions**

We are looking for volunteers who can participate in two online focus groups to co-design and test a new chatbot, Rita (Right Insights for Timely Advice). The first focus group will be in early December 2020, and the second in March 2021.

Despite the high prevalence and impact of dementia, there are barriers to timely diagnosis. Collecting information from older adults, those living with dementia and carers would help general practitioners (GPs) determine whether further investigation is warranted. Information gathering methods need to be engaging, and not worry people unnecessarily.

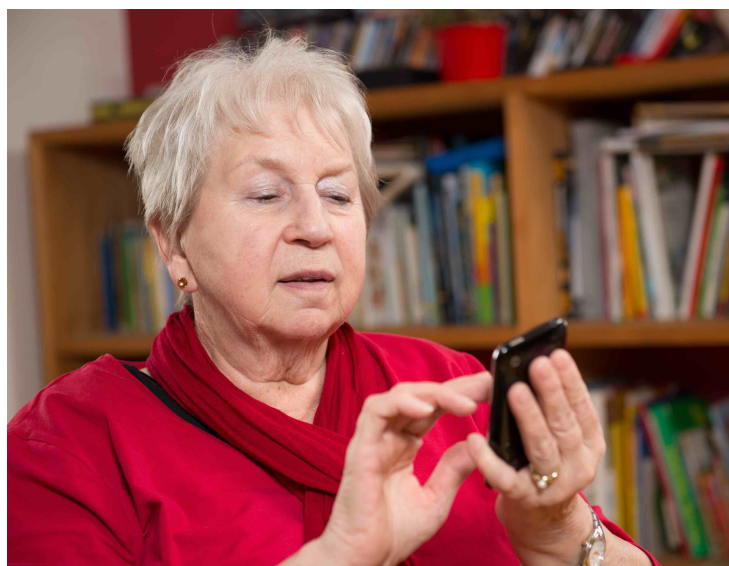
We would like to develop a chatbot that provides information on healthy ageing, collects information on cognitive functioning; empowers users in their healthcare; and provides summary reports to share with a GP to discuss the right way forward for care.

To participate, you will need to:

- be 50 years or older
- have access to a mobile device
- be willing to attend an initial online focus group as well as a follow-up session, and complete related surveys and workbooks
- have unimpaired hearing and vision

In the first focus group, we will ask you what information you think would be useful to provide and collect through a chatbot and how you would like to interact with Rita. In the second, we will give you a link to download Rita to a mobile device (phone or tablet) and ask you to interact with her, and answer some questions on your experience.

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING**  
Please call Janine Walker on 0422 993 016 or email [Janine.Walker@csiro.au](mailto:Janine.Walker@csiro.au)



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Psychotherapy via telehealth video-conferencing to treat anxiety

#### Introduction

Anxiety represents one of the most common mental health problems in the population, and can be experienced by people of any age. Anxiety influences a person's overall wellbeing and quality of life.

#### What are the components of anxiety?

- Emotional: feeling on edge, irritability, feelings of fear, dread and worry.
- Behavioural: being easily distracted, avoiding situations, worrisome thoughts, and being easily startled.
- Cognitive: persistent negative thoughts and intrusive worries, difficulties with concentration, focus and memory.
- Physical: increased heart rate, sweating, shaking, feeling of nausea and dizziness, muscle tension or pains, and having trouble sleeping.

Some activities, events or general circumstances can be naturally anxiety provoking for most people, and can be successfully overcome. However, some situations can be too intense or unexpected that anxiety can be difficult to cope with and manage.

Anxiety becomes a problem when it starts to significantly impact on a person's life. For example, when it makes them adjust their

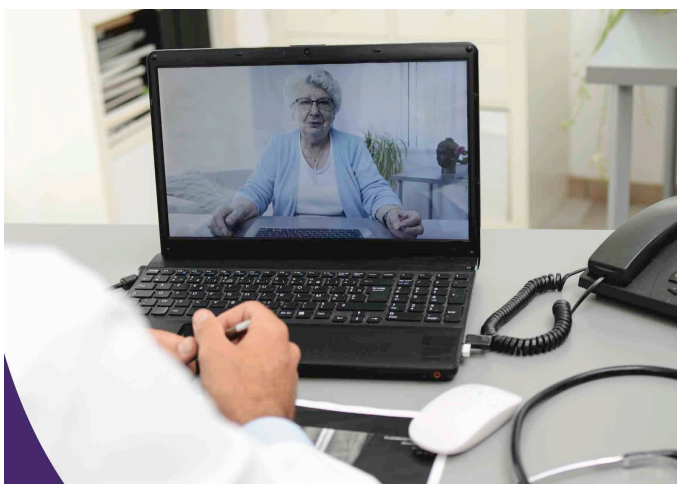
routine to avoid certain activities or situations, or when it makes them feel preoccupied and overwhelmed with fear, worries or ruminations, making it difficult to focus on anything else.

Anxiety can also be induced when exposed to ongoing stress, such as the current situation surrounding COVID-19. When exposed to stress for a long time, it might trigger similar responses to those listed above.

Recognising anxiety symptoms is therefore an important step towards learning new techniques to positively cope with experiences of anxiety, worry, and stress.

#### Research Objectives

Our study aims to test a new psychotherapeutic intervention delivered via video-conferencing to help combat anxiety in people living with cognitive impairment, irrespective of their location. Our 6-week program combines education about anxiety to help people understand their symptoms, and it provides relaxation techniques to help cope with anxiety.





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### How can I participate?

If you have been diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment or dementia and if you are currently experiencing any anxiety symptoms similar to what has been described above, we invite you to participate.

We will do an initial screen to check your eligibility for our study.

Participation in our study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any point.

### What equipment do I need to participate?

You will need an internet connection and a device to perform video-conferencing. This device can be a computer with a web camera, a tablet, iPad or smart phone.

### What help is available if I have never used video-conferencing?

We will provide you with a manual with clear instructions, a video link with step by step instructions, and support over the phone to help you setup your equipment for video-conferencing.

### What's required from participants?

- Filling out questionnaires before, and after the therapy.
- Participating in weekly therapy sessions for 6 weeks delivered via video-conferencing.
- Practise techniques learnt in therapy sessions.
- Give us feedback on the ease of use of technology as well as the content of the

therapeutic sessions.

### What's required from a support person?

We also invite a support person to participate, if you have one. A support person can be your partner, spouse, family member, friend or anyone who identifies as your carer. Support persons are not required to live with you. They can join your therapy session remotely via video-conferencing.

The support person is encouraged to participate in therapy sessions and practise the introduced techniques with you (e.g. deep breathing techniques for relaxation).

Support persons will also be given a questionnaire to complete before and after the intervention.

Your participation and feedback will help us improve this program.

### Important links:

[More information about the study](#)  
[Expression of Interest to participate](#)

### For more information contact:

T: 07 3346 5036 or 07 3346 5577

E: [anxietyresearch@uq.edu.au](mailto:anxietyresearch@uq.edu.au)

W: <https://clinical-research.centre.uq.edu.au/psychotherapy-telehealth-video-conferencing-treat-anxiety>

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Tell us about your experiences at work

Researchers from The University of Queensland are looking for healthy individuals who are in paid work or are self-employed to complete an online survey about their experiences at work. You may be eligible if you are:

- Aged above 18 years.
- Employed in paid work or self-employed.

If you would like to participate in this project, please visit the following link to assess your eligibility and register your interest:

[https://uniofqueensland.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_2gz3DvPYiDk2GyN](https://uniofqueensland.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2gz3DvPYiDk2GyN)

To thank you for your participation in this study you will be entered into a draw to win a \$50 Cole-Myer gift card.

For more information about this study, please email [y.alyousef@uq.net.au](mailto:y.alyousef@uq.net.au)



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

A University of Queensland study designed to improve balance in older adults with a hearing impairment has been made possible thanks to a generous donation from Sonova.

“Three in five adults aged over 60 have a hearing impairment and recent research shows that hearing impairment is a risk factor for falling, with every 10-dB increase in hearing loss putting an individual at greater risk of falling [1].

This study will test if a device that gives feedback on body position can improve and maintain balance and stability.

Participants will be required to wear a device which is battery powered and worn on a belt around the waist for 20-minute training sessions over 10 days.

The device records body sway, compares it to normative data and provides vibrotactile feedback to the wearer for retraining of balance.

The original version of the device has been used in research trials in Europe, Germany and Switzerland, however this will be the first time it will be used with older adults who have a hearing impairment.



The study is an international collaboration between Professor Sandy Brauer, Professor Louise Hickson, PhD students Jacinta Foster and Marina Mahafza from UQ's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; Department of Otolaryngology at Unfallkrankenhaus Berlin, Charite University Hospital Berlin; Center for Hearing and Balance, Department of Otolaryngology, Columbia University Medical Center and Sonova.

1. Lin, F.R. and L. Ferrucci, *Hearing Loss and Falls Among Older Adults in the United States*. Archives of Internal Medicine, 2012. **172**(4): p. 369-371.

### Volunteers needed for research

#### VIBRANT TRIAL

Three in five older adults aged over 60 have a hearing loss and the risk of falling for older adults is higher if they have a hearing loss. Researchers at The University of Queensland are conducting a study that will test if a device that gives feedback on body position can improve balance and stability.

- Are you over 60?
- Do you have mild to severe hearing loss?
- Do you have vertigo, feel dizzy, or unsteady?

If you would like more information or would like to volunteer please contact Katrina Kemp on 07 3365 4564 or [k.kemp@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.kemp@uq.edu.au)

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Can you share your thoughts about transport and technology for people living with dementia?

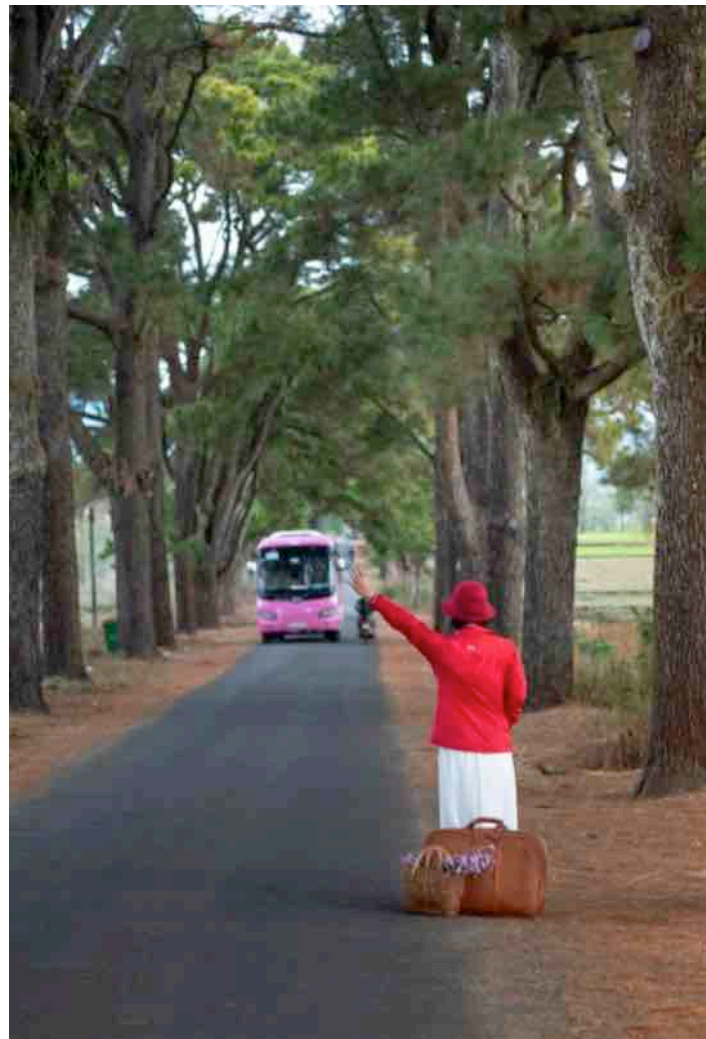
Researchers at the University of Queensland are interested in hearing about your current experiences with transportation, and your thoughts on current and future technologies which may change what is available in helping people get around. There have already been changes to transportation options like Uber and electronic tickets; and more changes are likely in the future including driverless buses and cars. We want to make sure these options are as usable, safe and helpful as possible for people living with dementia.

We are conducting flexible interviews and other research activities via zoom, telephone, email or mail.

We are keen to hear from:

- People living with mild dementia who are interested in talking about transportation issues
- Care partners of someone living with dementia
- Other stakeholders with an interest in transportation (transport providers, health professionals, local council, policymakers, researcher, technology developers)

Please contact Jacki Liddle if you have questions or are interested in participating:  
[j.liddle@uq.edu.au](mailto:j.liddle@uq.edu.au) or call (and leave a message) 07 3365 9765





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### LIVING LONGER – WORKING WELL Volunteers needed

Our workforce is ageing with many of us having or wanting to remain working beyond traditional retirement age. We want to understand how to better support older workers to remain well at work.

#### What?

We are conducting **online interviews (30-60 min) via videoconference** to learn about your personal experiences at your current or last workplace.

#### Who?

If you are:

- >45 years old
- currently in paid work/self-employed
- retired within the last 12 months

#### Why?

To help design tailored interventions supporting older people at work PLUS receive a \$25 gift voucher after completion of the interview!

#### More information:

Click [here](#) OR scan the **QR code** below:



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### HELP US UNDERSTAND HOW MUSIC AND SPEECH IS PROCESSED IN THE BRAIN

Researchers at the University of Queensland are seeking **healthy volunteers** for a study on music and speech processing. The project aims to improve our understanding of how music listening may stimulate speech and language processes.

**Where:** Herston Imaging Research Facility (HIRF), Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

**What will it involve:** (1) An MRI brain scan while completing music and word listening tasks, (2) brief music, cognitive, and language assessments. The study will take about **2-3 hours** to complete.

We would love to hear from you if you meet the following criteria:

- 55 years old or above
- **English** is your first language
- No history of neurological disease, mental illness, or head trauma
- No chronic respiratory, cardiovascular, or immunocompromised medical conditions
- **No metals present in the body** which would be unsafe in an MRI scanner

For more information, please contact Jennifer Lee:

[jennifer.lee3@uqconnect.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.lee3@uqconnect.edu.au)



This project has been reviewed by the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Human Research Ethics Committee, and was found to meet the National Health and Medical Research Council's code of conduct for human research (HREC Approval number: HREC/2018/QRBW/43699).

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### How people interact with their surroundings

We are currently seeking participants for a study investigating how people interact with their immediate surroundings, and how these interactions may fluctuate throughout a lifetime. The way we interact with objects in our immediate environment can inform us a lot about our personal boundaries.

We are seeking participants over the age of 50 to complete a decision-making game. Participants must not have a history of neurological disorders, psychiatric or cerebrovascular conditions. We are seeking participants who have good movement, and good/corrected vision, and who have good physical health and well-being. The task takes approximately 45 minutes, and you will be reimbursed with a \$20 Coles Myer Gift Card for your time.

If you are interested in participating, please contact us!

**Phone: 0478 156 595; e-Mail:**  
**clarkson.paff@gmail.com**

*Ethical clearance number: #2019001659*





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### A Memory Training Program for Older Adults

Interested in finding out what happens to your memory as you age?

Want to learn some techniques to improve your memory?

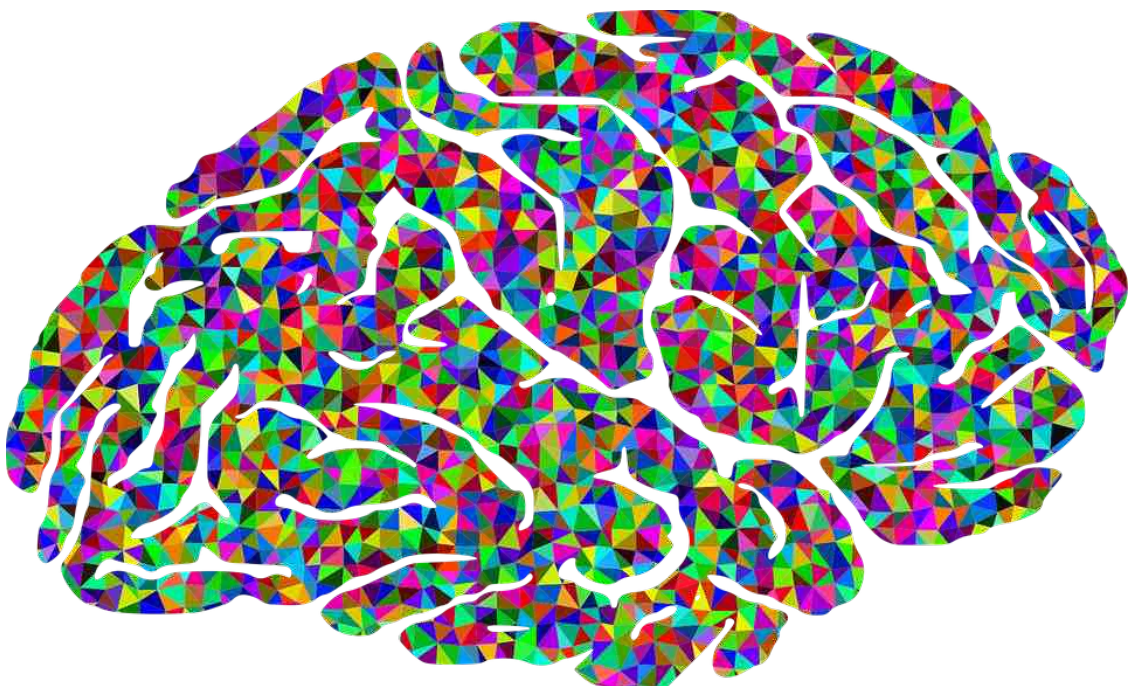
Then you will love this study!

The aim of this study is to help you feel more secure about your memory and to be able to use it better.

We are looking for older adults aged 60 years and above who can commit to 12 hours spread over five days across 2 months, do not have a neurological disorder, have unimpaired/corrected hearing and vision, and have a mobile phone. The program will be run at the University of Queensland Psychology Clinic with easy access to and from by public transport and free parking.

You will receive a certificate of completion at the end of the study.

Please contact me at [bmtpuq@gmail.com](mailto:bmtpuq@gmail.com) or on **0425 207 506** for more information or if you would like to sign up.





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### The QLD Mind Project

Researchers from the UQ School of Psychology are seeking older adults to help them better understand how the ability to interpret specific types of social information, as well as some aspects of memory, are affected by a range of clinical disorders.

To understand if these abilities are affected, they need to assess a non-clinical comparison group. Participation in this study will involve completing a single testing session of approximately three to four hours duration. During the session, you will be asked to complete paper based and computerised measures that tap into these and related abilities.

You'll receive:

You will receive \$80 to cover travel expenses and for participation in the study.

Eligibility:

1. Aged 45 years or older;
2. A native English speaker, or have a high level of English proficiency;
3. No current/previous diagnosis of a

psychiatric illness (e.g. bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, on-going issues that have required recent hospitalization or continuing treatment by a psychologist/psychiatrist);

4. No neurological disease or neurological development disorder (e.g. Epilepsy, Parkinson's disease);
5. No current or past brain trauma (e.g. stroke, traumatic brain injury);
6. No substance abuse (e.g. alcoholism); and
7. No other illness that may impact day-to-day functioning and engagement with activities (e.g. chronic fatigue syndrome).

Register your interest:

For more information or to participate please contact Sarah Coundouris via [s.coundouris@uq.edu.au](mailto:s.coundouris@uq.edu.au) or 0448 833 569.

*This study has been approved by The University of Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee [Approval No. 2018001920]*



Research

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### The PEAK Study

#### ***Physiotherapy, Exercise and Physical Activity for Knee Osteoarthritis – The PEAK Study***

People with knee osteoarthritis (OA) often consult a physiotherapist for management of their knee problems. Physiotherapy management typically involves the delivery of a structured strengthening exercise program, and advice about how to manage and increase physical activity levels. Physiotherapy may be delivered in any number of ways:

- Face-to-face consultations
- Consultations in public/private hospital settings
- Consultations at private practices
- Consultations at rehabilitation centres
- Video consultations over the internet
- Group-based classes
- Telephone consultations
- Consultations in community health centres
- Home-based visits from a physiotherapist
- Shared consultations with other health professionals
- Consultations in the workplace

We wish to evaluate the effectiveness of how physiotherapy is delivered to people with knee OA.

#### **What will the study involve?**

This study is comparing two different methods of delivery of physiotherapy for people with knee OA. Participants will be allocated to one of two groups. Both groups will receive the same quality care by a physiotherapist based on the best current research evidence. This will involve 5 consultations with a physiotherapist over a 3-month period, including an individualised strengthening exercise program and physical activity plan. Participants in both groups will receive detailed educational information about osteoarthritis and its management, resistance bands for exercising and a wearable activity

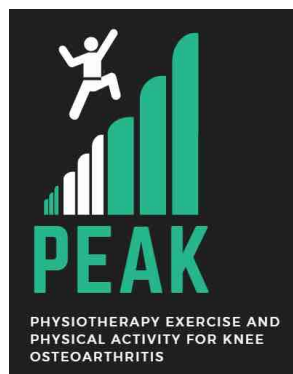
tracker to help with increasing physical activity. Participants will also be asked to complete a questionnaire at four different time-points throughout the duration of the study (9 months).

#### **Who can participate?**

We are looking for participants who are aged over 45 years with knee pain on most days who can commit approximately 9 months to the study and are not currently receiving physiotherapy treatment for their knee pain. You cannot participate in this study if you: have had a knee replacement in your most painful knee, have had any knee surgery within the last 6 months or are on the waiting list for surgery, have a diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis or other inflammatory arthritis, have participated in any strength training exercises for your leg muscles in the last 6 months, or have any neurological or cardiovascular conditions.

We are looking for volunteers who are residing in/around the following locations:

- Brisbane CBD and surrounding suburbs
- Northern Brisbane suburbs (e.g. Bracken Ridge)
- Mooloolaba
- Mackay/Cannonvale
- Toowoomba



To register your interest for this study, please visit:

[www.peakstudy.com.au](http://www.peakstudy.com.au)

OR email the trial coordinator

**Penny Campbell:**

[penelope.campbell@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:penelope.campbell@unimelb.edu.au)

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### CarFreeMe driving cessation program and clinical trials for people living with dementia

If you or someone you know needs support, we are currently recruiting for participants (people living with dementia and their care partners/family member) to take part in our 'living with dementia and driving study', supported by the NHMRC. Brief details of the program are outlined below. Our current sites include South East Queensland (in person, or by telehealth delivery); and the ACT and Southern NSW (by telehealth). We aim to expand our trials to other areas of Queensland and Northern NSW; and by telehealth to other parts of Australia, so if you are interested please get in touch.

CarFreeMe is an education and support program that uses effective, research-based, client-centered methods to support people living with dementia. Our program supports the emotional and practical challenges that are faced by people living with dementia who must inevitably give up driving. Our trials are open to people living with dementia and their care partner/support person.

Participants **may be still driving** and planning to stop in future **or have stopped driving** and are **needing support** to cope with the life changes, to find alternative means of transportation, and remain engaged in the

community. The intervention includes seven modules which are usually delivered across seven weeks (approximately 1-1.5 hours each module) to participants in their own homes, by a registered health professional who is trained in CarFreeMe. Participants may elect to take part in one or more group sessions [depending upon preference and location]. There is no cost to participants. As part of the study, participants will take part in three assessments; pre- and post-intervention, and follow-up. Control group participants will receive the intervention after the wait period.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Project Coordinator: Donna Rooney, email: [donna.rooney@uq.edu.au](mailto:donna.rooney@uq.edu.au), telephone: 07 3365 6392; or CI Dr Theresa Scott

email: [theresa.scott@uq.edu.au](mailto:theresa.scott@uq.edu.au)  
telephone: 07 3443 2546.

Note: this study is open to Telehealth



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

Sterling is a boy with a dream. His dream is to find a cure for Dementia. When Sterling was 3 years old his Grandmother was admitted into a nursing home with Dementia and since then he has always wanted to find a cure. Sterling is now an Ambassador for The Common Good at The Prince Charles Hospital. He highlights that dementia has an impact on everyone, even someone so young.

There is no cure for dementia. Right now, there are more than 44 million sufferers worldwide, and that number is expected to treble by 2050. The impact this will have on individuals, their families and our health system will be devastating.

Alzheimer's Disease is the most common form of dementia, accounting for up to 70% of all dementias. In health, the brain relies on neurochemicals to send messages between nerves. One of the typical features of Alzheimer's Disease is a decline in function of these chemical signals. The nerves and chemicals most vulnerable to these changes are in the memory forming parts of the brain.

### The "Sterling's Dream" Study

This study is led by Dr Eamonn Eeles, Geriatrician/Physician and Head of Research of Internal Medicine Services at TPC. His team includes researchers from the Australian E-Health Research Centre, CSIRO and the Queensland Brain Institute.



By using innovative imaging the team will measure the chemical signals in the memory-forming part of the brain. They hope this study will help us better understand if there are certain brain characteristics in people who don't have Alzheimer's Disease which differ in people who have early stages of the disease.

This information may also assist us in understanding which patients may respond better to treatments that are used in Alzheimer's Disease and therefore help target management of this disease more effectively.

We are inviting people over 55 years of age who have Alzheimer's Disease who can have an MRI to participate.

We are also inviting people over 55 years of age who don't have Alzheimer's Disease and can have an MRI. These people will be part of our control group.

[Read more about our study](#)

### What will the participants be asked to do?

We will ask people who would like to participate to come to The Prince Charles Hospital for a clinical assessment, neuropsychology assessment and memory tests.

Participants will then be asked to undergo brain imaging using state of the art technology at the Herston Imaging Research Facility.

Travel costs will be met by the study. Refreshments will be provided.

### How can you be invited to participate?

Phone the study Research Assistant, Anne Bucetti, on: (07) 3139-7208.



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Exploring the experiences of adult with hearing difficulties and their families

UQ researchers are conducting a study to better understand the experiences of adults with hearing difficulties and their significant others.

We are seeking participants aged 50+ years who have experienced hearing difficulties since adulthood and do not wear hearing aids, and their significant others (e.g., partner/spouse, adult child, friend, neighbour, colleague).

Participation will include:

- A hearing test
- Questionnaires
- Interviews with a researcher
- Smartphone surveys
- Video-recording conversations with you and others

The first three activities will be completed at a time and location suited to you and your significant other (e.g., remotely via Zoom, at UQ campus, or at your home) over at least **two meetings** with a member of the research team.

The smartphone surveys and video-recording conversations are completed within your own time over a two week period.

You'll receive:

To thank you for your time, both you and your significant other will each receive a \$50 gift voucher.

Register your interest:

For more information or to register interest, please contact Anna Francis on (07) 3443 2432 or [anna.francis1@uq.edu.au](mailto:anna.francis1@uq.edu.au)

*This study has been approved by The University of Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee [Approval No. 2019001869]*

**For additional information or to be added to the AMI mailing list and Listserve, please contact us via email at [ami@uq.edu.au](mailto: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**