

Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 27 March 2016 Newsletter

www.uq.edu.au/ami

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Important Update!

The Ageing Mind Initiative (AMI) is undergoing some changes to reach a broader audience and make ageing-related research more accessible for everyone.

Previously people interested in joining the 50+ Registry to receive AMI Newsletters had to sign a consent form and provide some demographic details. We have recently made the decision to remove this administrative step to streamline the process. This means that it is easier than ever to join our mailing list!

To receive AMI Newsletters all you have to do is email ami@uq.edu.au to express your interest. The email address that you contact us through will automatically be added to our mailing list. This is of course a completely free to unsubscribe at any time by emailing us again.



ISSUE QUOTE:

The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination. ~ Albert Einstein

The Changes We Do Not See

Improving Diagnosis And Treatment of Anxiety in Parkinson's Disease (IDATA-PD STUDY)

Dr Nadeeka Dissanayaka

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive brain disease and is one of the more common neurological disorders observed in later life. In Australia, 1 in every 340 people lives with PD. Although PD is considered a *movement* disorder due to tremor, stiffness, slowness in movement, difficulties in walking and problems with balance, there are a large number of non-motor related issues including anxiety, depression, and dementia frequently dominate the clinical picture and adversely impact patients' quality of life, often to a greater extent than the motor disability.

Anxiety is a highly prevalent condition experienced by 1 in every 2 people with PD. Anxiety significantly impairs activities of daily living and reduces quality of life in PD patients. While two thirds of anxious PD patients do not receive any treatment for their anxiety, of those who do receive medication 80% are unresponsive.

To complicate matters further, anxiety in PD presents with unique and complex symptomatology, which must be understood and addressed if a psychological intervention is to be effective.

Story continued on page 3...



Research Transforming Lives

The Changes We Do Not See

Continued...

Our Australian **IDATA-PD study** aims to Improve Diagnosis And Treatment of Anxiety in Parkinson's Disease. As a highly productive clinical research team, IDATA-PD has advanced knowledge in current anxiety assessment in PD, contributed to better conceptualisation of anxiety by profiling anxious symptomatology unique to PD such as anxiety relating to motor disability and motor fluctuations, and developed a new PD-specific anxiety inventory (PD-SAI) for measuring change in response to tailored psychotherapy approaches.

Our IDATA-PD study was the first to pilot Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) for anxiety in PD using a tailored, manualised, and dyadic protocol involving both PD patients and their caregivers. This innovative dyadic intervention delivered using conventional face-to-face modality demonstrated significant immediate and persistent reductions in anxiety in PD, and significantly lowered carer burden. In future, we hope to trial CBT for anxiety in PD using telehealth video conferencing new technologies.

Telehealth video conferencing delivery method of CBT not only assist in getting much-needed interventions to PD patients in regional areas, but are useful in minimizing travel burden for PD patients where transport and mobility are an issue, as well as cost benefits. While developing

evidence based and targeted treatment to combat anxiety in PD, our IDATA-PD study endeavours to increase accessibility of psychological care for both urban and rural residents with PD and PD patients with impaired mobility, all of which will contribute to improve quality of life of many patients afflicted by this progressive incurable brain disease.

The Neuro Mental Health (NMH) group at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research (UQCCR) has a vision to use cutting edge innovative treatment and technology to provide accurate targeted therapies for PD patients afflicted by mental dysfunction. This group closely collaborates with School of Psychology, The University of Queensland and Department of Neurology, Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital.

UQCCR
UQ Centre for Clinical Research

Research Update: Attitudes to Ageing and their Impact

With increasing life expectancies it is important to identify factors that are related with older adults attitudes toward ageing to guide potential interventions, identify modifiable and protective factors, and promote successful ageing. As part of an honours university research project, an online study was conducted to investigate the relationship between older adult's attitudes toward their own ageing, loneliness, and physical activity among 94 Australians aged 50 years and older.

The survey included three questionnaires: the Attitudes to Ageing Questionnaire (AAQ), the UCLA Loneliness Scale, and the Physical Activity Scale for the Elderly (PASE). The AAQ measured three factors including psychological growth, psychosocial loss, and physical change.

Results showed that more positive attitudes to ageing were related to lower levels of loneliness and more negative attitudes toward psychosocial loss were found to predict higher levels of loneliness, followed by negative attitudes to physical change.



Results also suggested that older adults who reported negative attitudes to Psychosocial Loss were more likely to experience higher levels of loneliness. This suggests that positive attitudes to ageing may be a protective factor against loneliness and the associated negative physical and mental health outcomes to promote adaptability to age related challenges and successful ageing in older adults.

In regards to physical activity, results showed that physical change attitudes and physical activity were related with significant results for walking and light/strenuous physical activities. These findings suggest a relationship between a person's level of physical activity and how they perceive their ageing experience, and in addition contribute to research by adding to the limited amount of research currently available using the AAQ.

Attitudes to ageing therefore play a role in both levels of loneliness experienced and a smaller role with regards to engagement in physical activity. More research is needed to uncover more regarding the relationship between an individual's attitude towards their own ageing and the associated sense of wellbeing and life satisfaction.

We would like to thank the participants for taking the time to be involved in our research.

Michelle Harris & Debra Redley
USQ Honours students 2015

News from the Community

AMI goes Dutch!

AMI researcher and coordinator, Dr Emma Poulsen, has relocated to Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She has taken up a lecturing position at Webster University, Leiden. She will be joining the Faculty teaching the Masters of Psychology program. Dr Poulsen will continue to coordinate AMI from abroad. Dr Poulsen said "I look forward to this exciting new adventure and will continue update AMI readers on the global developments in ageing research"



Wester University

Upcoming Events

On behalf of the Conference Organising Committee, Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland and the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) it is our immense pleasure to invite you to join us for the **International Federation on Ageing 13th Global Conference.**

The program will continue to advance IFA's agendas in Age-friendly Cities and Communities, Aged Care, Elder Abuse and Income Protection as well as focusing on Disasters in an Ageing World. The Conference will incorporate international keynote speakers, oral presentations, posters, exhibition and social events.

Registration can be completed online. Should you experience any difficulties please contact the Conference Managers by calling

+61 7 3226 2800 or
emailing ifa2016@arinex.com.au.
21-23rd June 2016

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
<http://ifa2016.org.au/>



Upcoming Events

UQ Psychology



www.psy.uq.edu.au

The first UQ Compassion Symposium was run in 2014 and featured well-known neurosurgeon and Director of CCARE at Stanford University, **Professor James Doty**, who spoke about *The Compassion Imperative*. The second Symposium was in 2015, and featured the dynamic and inspiring **Dr Dennis Tirsch** from the Center for Mindfulness and Compassion in New York City, who spoke about *Compassion and Mindful Courage*.

An annual event, the UQ Compassion Symposium is designed to bring together high-calibre academics, clinicians, researchers and students from a range of disciplines to showcase compassion-based research and practice. We are requesting expressions of interest to present at this year's Compassion Symposium, which will be held on Saturday 1 October 2016 at The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. This is a great opportunity to share expertise, techniques and ideas with the ever-growing compassion community.

The 2016 full-day format will include two concurrent streams: **research** and **practice**. The research stream will focus on the presentation of contemporary research relating to the topic of compassion, while the practice stream will revolve around the

application of compassion in various contexts.

Keynote Speaker

The 2016 event will feature **Dr Emiliana Simon-Thomas**, Science Director at the Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkeley, who will be building on these themes and covering recent research and practice in the areas of *compassion, kindness, gratitude, and happiness*.

Dr Simon-Thomas is an extremely engaging presenter at the forefront of compassion research, and has developed the extremely popular UC Berkeley course, *The Science of Happiness*.

This keynote public lecture will be held on Friday 30 September 2016.



QLD Dementia Training Study Centre Guest Lecture Program

The Queensland Dementia Training Study Centre is led by the Queensland University of Technology and is co-located with the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre (DCRC): Carers and Consumers.

The QLD DTSC is located at: Room N614, Level 6 of N Block
Queensland University of Technology (Kelvin Grove Campus)
Kelvin Grove QLD 4159

If you would like any further information, please contact ph. 07 3138 3822 or qlddtsc@qut.edu.au

Date & Time	Topic	Presenter
Tuesday 15 March 5:00pm to 6:30pm	Promoting Quality of Life for People Living with Dementia: The Use of Lifestyle Activities to Prevent &/or Respond to Behaviours	Lois Eastgate and Gail Maskiel DBMAS Alzheimer's Australia (Qld) Limited
Tuesday 12 April 5:00pm to 6:30pm	Current Issues in Dementia Training	Professor Elizabeth Beattie Director Dementia Collaborative Research Centre (DCRC) and Dementia Training Study Centre (DTSC) Queensland University of Technology
Tuesday 17 May 5:00pm to 6:30pm	Nutrition for People with Dementia	Professor Sandra Capra Director of School of Human Movement and Nutrition Sciences Centre for Dietetics Research The University of Queensland
Tuesday 21 June 5:00pm to 6:30pm	Integrating Person Centred Care: From the Individual to the Organisation	Associate Professor Christine Brown Wilson Director of Teaching and Learning School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work The University of Queensland

Guest Lectures will also available at the following
video-conference sites: Brisbane, Bowen, Bundaberg, Caboolture, Cairns, Charters Towers,
Gympie, Ingham, Longreach, Mackay, Maryborough, Mt Isa, Nambour, Robina, Thuringowa,
Thursday Island, Townsville and Yeppoon

Current Ageing Research

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

How do different thinking skills relate to language?

We are conducting a study to investigate different aspects of thinking and cognition, and language production.

We are seeking the help of:

Males and females aged 50-85 years with English as first language and no neurological history.

Why this research?

We are looking at how different aspects of cognition are related to language, and how certain parts of the brain control a range of thinking skills. For example, we will be looking at how the brain pays attention to information seen in the environment, or how a spoken or nonverbal response is produced, or how a plan or strategy is made when problem solving. The overall findings will potentially benefit patients with illnesses or conditions that affect the brain through improved assessment, more specific rehabilitation and a clearer understanding of various cognitive deficits.

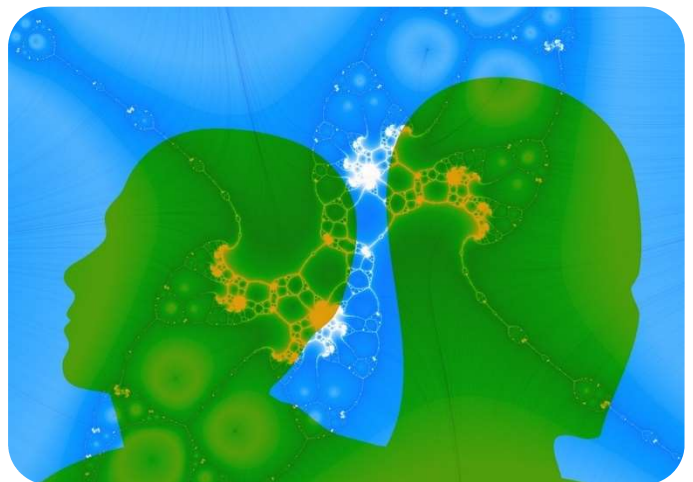
What will I be asked to do?

Participating involves completing a 3-4 hour one-on-one session with the experimenter, where you will be asked to do several simple tasks that look at your thinking skills. This may involve responding verbally (i.e. speaking) or

nonverbally (e.g., pointing) to words, dots and pictures. The tasks are carried out with pen and paper or via computer. For example, you might be asked the name of an object, to talk about pictures, or respond to stimuli on computer screens by pressing a button. Each task will be explained to you beforehand with examples given. Testing sessions can be split across two days if needed.

There is no cost to participate and the study will take place at the St Lucia campus of The University of Queensland Brisbane (or at your home if suitable) at a time that is convenient for you.

If you would like to learn more or participate, please contact Megan Barker at megan.barker@uqconnect.edu.au, or on 0423 871 923.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Imaging the Ageing Brain

Dementia refers to a group of age-related brain illnesses. People with these illnesses experience problems with memory, thinking and daily tasks. There might also be changes in their social interactions. It can be very difficult to diagnose these illnesses at the early stage. Sometimes they can be confused with other mental illnesses, especially in younger patients. These diagnostic difficulties bring frustration and confusion to the patients and families, and delay proper treatment.

This study will use advanced imaging techniques to examine how the brain changes in dementia and other age-related illnesses. We invite you to participate in our research study if you are between 45 to 65 years old, and 1) you are diagnosed with one of these illnesses: Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, late-onset bipolar disorder, or 2) you are healthy without any neuropsychiatric disorders. You will answer some questions and undergo brain imaging scans. This information will help us understand the ageing brain and how it influences behaviour. We hope to find better way to identify these brain illnesses, so that proper care can be delivered.



Together, we can make a difference

Are you between 45-70 years of age?

- Diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia or late-onset bipolar disorder?

OR

- Healthy without any neuropsychiatric disorders?

If you'd like to participate, please contact

Phone 07 3845 3805

Email brain.recruit@qimrberghofer.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Can Brain Stimulation Improve Learning in Older Adults?

Even healthy older people frequently struggle to remember the names of people they have met for the first time or report problems remembering new information. We are currently conducting a study to find out if those age-associated problems can be alleviated using a new brain stimulation technique (transcranial Direct Current Stimulation, tDCS).

We are looking for *healthy older adults over 55 years of age*, who are right-handed, have English as a primary language, with no history of neurological diseases, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation in the study will involve an initial assessment during which memory, language and other functions will be tested (2-3 hours), *a series of word learning sessions held over 5 consecutive days* (approx. 1.5 hours each), and two additional follow-up sessions 1 week and 3 months after the learning period (2-3 hours/each).

During the learning sessions, we will attach 2 electrodes to your scalp using a rubber band and apply a very weak constant current to your head (tDCS). This technique is a safe procedure with

no known adverse side effects except for a mild tingling sensation or itching when the machine is turned on for about 30 seconds.

You will receive \$250 as reimbursement for your time and travel for the entire duration of the study. The research will take place at the UQ Centre for Clinical Research (UQCCR) which is at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital.

If you have any further questions about this study or would be interested in participation please contact:

Garon Perceval

email: g.perceval@uq.edu.au

phone 0421235651



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Interested in Maintaining a Healthy Brain?

If you're aged 55 and over, you may be eligible to participate in a University of Queensland brain science study.

Researchers are trialling a unique, non-invasive brain stimulation technique to improve how we perceive other people's perspectives and emotions.

We are looking for healthy older adults over 55 years of age, who are right-handed, have English as a primary language, with no history of neurological diseases, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation in this study will involve 2-3 sessions (approx.. 1.5 hours each) during which you will be asked to perform a series of tasks

testing various aspects of cognitive functioning.

During the stimulation we will attach 2 electrodes to your scalp using a rubber band and/or cap and conductive gel. A weak constant current will be applied to your head (tDCS). This technique is a safe procedure with no known adverse side effects except for a mild tingling sensation or itching when the machine is turned on for about 30 seconds.

Research will take place in Herston, Brisbane. Participants will be reimbursed.

For more information or to participate, email uq.brainstim2@gmail.com

UQCCR
UQ Centre for Clinical Research



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Seeking Volunteers with Tennis Elbow and Healthy Volunteers For Tendon Pain Research

We are seeking volunteers who have tennis elbow (pain over the outer side of the elbow), and volunteers aged 35-70 years who have not had any pain or injuries in the last 6 months to participate in a study investigating different types of sensation in people with tennis elbow.

Background and Aims of the Project

Tendon pain and problems are very common, can be quite disabling, and are often difficult to treat. While there has been increasing knowledge of tendon problems, we still do not understand the underlying pain mechanisms. Preliminary research has indicated that there are changes in the way the central nervous system functions that might underpin the severity of tendon pain. This has been discovered by using some measures from a battery of tests called Quantitative Sensory Tests (QST). In this research project we are testing both those with and without tendon problems by using a comprehensive QST. The study primarily aims to answer the questions:

What is the difference in QST between those with tendon problems and those without?

What is the relationship of any of these QST differences and the patient's ratings of their tendon pain and problems?

Will these measures predict long-term outcomes of patients with these tendon problems?

How much time is involved?

Completing an online survey: We would like you to answer some simple questions about your health and elbow pain to ascertain that you do not have any medical or health related matters that exclude you from the study. This will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

One session: You will be required to attend 2 sessions at the University of Queensland School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at St Lucia where:

A brief physical assessment will be conducted to confirm that you do have tennis elbow.

A battery of non-invasive sensory measurements will be conducted. Sensory measurements test either sensation (i.e. first perception of a stimulus, such as light pressure, stroking, pin prick) or pain thresholds (i.e., the first onset of pain with a stimulus, such as pressure, heat or cold).

The first session will take approximately 2 hours and the second session will take approximately 1 hour. You will be recompensed reasonable expenses.

Questionnaires: Prior to attending the session, we would like you to complete a series of questionnaires, which will be emailed/mailed out to you. This should take approximately 20 minutes.

If willing to assist, please email sirph@uq.edu.au for more information.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Help us find early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of aging dementia. In Australia the number of people with this condition is predicted to rise from 245,000 in 2010 to 1.1 million people in 2050. Accurately diagnosing people with, or at risk of, developing Alzheimer's disease and monitoring their progress over time, will be vital to reducing the economic and social burden of this condition by enabling existing treatments and care options to be tailored for each patient and for showing quantitative efficacy of experimental drugs.

What will the study involve? The study will look at whether some tests can differentiate between three groups of people – those diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment, those with mild Alzheimer's disease, and people who do not have Alzheimer's disease.

This study has two parts. In Study 1 we will ask you to complete a background information sheet including some personal details, like your age and place of birth. We will measure your cognition by asking you to complete a brief cognitive screen and some computerized tasks.

In Study 2 we will also ask you to have an MRI. You can choose whether you would like to take part in Study 1 or Study 2 only, or both. Separate consent forms will need to be signed for both studies.

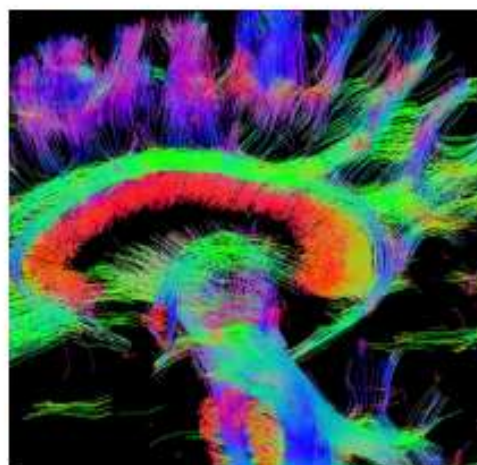
What are the possible discomforts? The testing can be tiring and we will give you as many

breaks as you need to help reduce tiredness. The MRI scanner is tight for space and makes a humming noise, and some people may experience claustrophobia. If you feel it is uncomfortable to be in the scanner, please tell us and you can choose to cease participation in this part of the study

Who is eligible to participate? You are eligible to participate if you have never been diagnosed with either Alzheimer's disease or Mild Cognitive Impairment and if you are aged 65 years or older.

What are the benefits of participating in this research? You will not get any medical benefit from this study, however you may feel good about helping in medical research. The MRI scans will be used in research and will not be used diagnostically. A radiologist will not report on the images, however, if we observe any brain anomalies we will notify you and your GP. This study might help others in the future by giving us a better understanding of how to diagnose Alzheimer's disease early.

To participate, please contact:
Mrs Lacey Atkins 0417 685 601
(07) 3346 3343 or l.atkins@uq.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS

People with no ankle pain are needed

Physiotherapy researchers at The University of Queensland are investigating differences in ankle symptoms and function in people with and without ankle pain.

We are looking for adults who do not have ankle pain to participate in this study. Information will be compared to that obtained from people who do have ankle pain.

Participation involves completing an online survey that asks about any ankle injuries or problems you have experience, your ankle function, as well as some general questions, such as your age and weight. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort associated with participation in this study and you can withdraw from completing the survey at any time. The findings of this research will help us to better understand of impairments and functional consequences of ankle problems.

For more information about this study, please contact:
Munira Al Mahrouqi by email: munira.almahrouqi@uq.net.au



For additional information or to be added to the AMI mailing list and Listserve, 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