



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 23 February 2015 Newsletter
www.uq.edu.au/ami

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Welcome to the first edition of the AMI Newsletter for 2015. The goal of the AMI team is to release quarterly editions of the Newsletter each year.



The start of 2015 has been an active one in terms of community involvement and upcoming research projects. We also have some exciting community events that available to both researchers and members of the community. Our feature event is a retirement planning workshop that is being held at The University of Queensland throughout March (page 4).

Thank you again for your ongoing support of the AMI Newsletter. If you are interested in any of the advertised research projects, contact the researcher on the advertisement directly and they will give details that you need to know about participating.

If you have any questions please email them through to:
ami@uq.edu.au



ISSUE QUOTE:

"I have reached an age when, if someone tells me to wear socks, I don't have to." Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

GERIATRIC ANXIETY INVENTORY (GAI)

INFORMATION SHEET

ASSESSING ANXIETY IN THE AGEING

ANXIETY IN THE AGEING

While everyone has experienced anxiety at one time or another, ongoing high levels of anxiety have the potential to impact on the overall health and wellbeing of older people. To instigate appropriate treatments for older adults with anxiety, improved assessment is needed. With this in mind, a team from The University of Queensland (UQ) has developed a diagnostic tool to enable easier and more accurate screening of anxiety in older people.

ABOUT THE GERIATRIC ANXIETY INVENTORY

The Geriatric Anxiety Inventory (GAI) is a 20-item self-report questionnaire covering topics related to anxiety symptoms. These typical symptoms include feelings of fearfulness, worry, physical symptoms of anxiety such as a nervous stomach and concerns about the impacts of worry and anxiety. There is also a shorter 5-item version of the GAI suitable for incorporation in a more general mental health assessment process.

The design of the questionnaire is straightforward and intentionally limits the response options to "agree" or "disagree", allowing the GAI to be easily administered by a range of health care professionals across various clinical settings. The GAI is also simple enough to be effectively administered over the telephone.

GET THE GAI

The GAI is available under license. Depending on what you want to use it for will determine the type of license you will need. Say you want to use it in your clinical practice, then a commercial use license is for you. You want to use the GAI in your academic teaching? Then you need a non-commercial use license.

Go to gai.net.au or scan the QR code.



CLIENTS

Here is just a sample of some of our happy GAI users from across the world:



Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.



GAI INVENTORS



Professor
Nancy Pachana



Professor
Gerard Byrne

Sunlight and Vitamin D

Vitamin D deficiency is an often undetected issue. New research shows that it may not just impact on physical health but also mental health.

A recent study found a connection between seasonal affective disorder (SAD), and a lack of sunlight. This connection seems to be more complex than being simply a contributing factor. Indeed, it appears as though sunlight could have a role in the regulation of developing SAD.

A review of more than 100 articles was completed and a relationship between vitamin D and seasonal depression was discovered. This link has been found to relate to SAD which affects up to 10% of the population, and is a type of depression related to seasonal changes. Depressive symptoms can occur as Vitamin D levels change with seasonal sunlight fluctuates.

Geographical location can play a role in this with locations that experience higher rates of sunlight being less affected. Studies have further shown a delay of about eight weeks between the peak in intensity of ultraviolet radiation and the onset of SAD. This relationship correlates with the time it takes for UV radiation to be

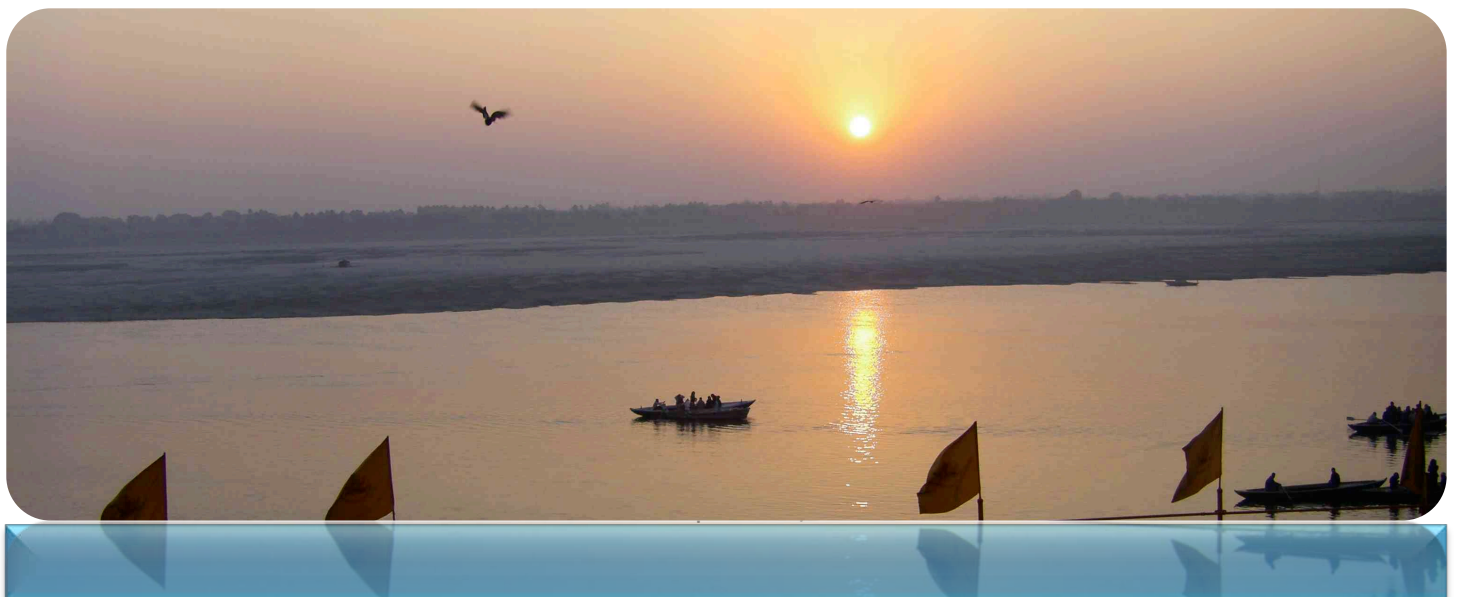
processed by the body into vitamin D.

Studies have also found depressed patients commonly had lower levels of vitamin D. Skin pigmentation is a factor to consider with darker skin tones experiencing higher rates of vitamin D deficiency, which could in turn lead to higher rates of psychological and psychiatric conditions.

The take away message for this research is that adequate levels of vitamin D are essential in maintaining not only physical health but also mental health.

Surprisingly, figures show that despite being a nation of ample sunlight, many Australian's still have a vitamin D deficiency. If in doubt, you can always have your vitamin D levels checked with your local General Practitioner.

Journal Reference: Alan E. Stewart, Kathryn A. Roecklein, Susan Tanner, Michael G. Kimlin. Possible contributions of skin pigmentation and vitamin D in a polyfactorial model of seasonal affective disorder. *Medical Hypotheses*, 2014; 83 (5): 517 DOI: [10.1016/j.mehy.2014.09.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mehy.2014.09.010)



UQ Retirement Planning Workshop

Free one-day workshop for couples (Brisbane)



Retirement planning is not a one-off affair. You and your partner will likely face changing circumstances as time passes. The UQ Retirement Planning Program equips you with handy communication tools and presents recent research findings and expert videos to assist you in your retirement journey.

Areas covered:

1. Health
2. Individual, couple & social activities
3. Financial Planning

Available Workshop Dates

02 March (Monday)
Sunnybank Hills Library

07 March (Saturday)
Bulimba Library

08 March (Sunday)
Kenmore Library



Workshops run 9 to 4pm. Couples will receive hardcopy materials from government departments/ organisations to assist them with planning.

To register or for queries:

Contact Angie Ho at **042 0303 014** or email her at **s4306696@student.uq.edu.au**

More details on website:

<https://exp.psy.uq.edu.au/couples/index.html?project=retirement&page=welcome>



News from the Community

AMI staff volunteered at the RSPCA Pop-up Adoption drive held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre on 17th January 2015.

AMI have previously published articles on the health benefits of pet ownership so we were happy to help out and support with this worthy cause. There have been a number of creative programs in the past few years that support animal welfare and responsible pet ownership. This particular initiative was in response to a number of animal shelters operating at capacity with particular high numbers of animals requiring re-homing this Christmas season.

Nearly 10,000 people walked through the doors and 276 dogs, puppies, cats and kittens found their fur-ever home (that is more than one animal adopted every 2 minutes). If you missed out attending on the day, fret not. The RSPCA adoption centers are still open throughout Queensland during standard operation hours.



Upcoming Events

Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research Public Dementia Forum

The Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research Public Dementia Forum brings together Australia's leading experts in dementia research and care, highlighting the latest scientific developments, treatments and care available today and government policy commitments for the future. Register by emailing qbievents@uq.edu.au.

For more information, click here - <http://qbi.uq.edu.au/content/cjcadr-public-dementia-forum> or contact Jo Sutton on ex. 36326.

Forum Date & Location: Thursday 19th February from 8.45am to 1.30pm in the QBI Auditorium, Level 7, Queensland Brain Institute (#79), St. Lucia Campus

Upcoming Events



QLD DTSC Guest Lecture Brisbane + Regional QLD Videoconference Sites

'Promoting Positive Wellbeing for Older People in Residential Aged Care'

Presented by Doctor Judy McCrow PhD RN
Clinical Practice Development Facilitator
Churches of Christ

Date: Tuesday 17 February 2015
Time: 5:00pm to 6:30pm (Registration from 4:30pm)
Venue: Seminar Room Q430, Institute for Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI)
QUT, Cnr 60 Musk Ave and Blamey St, Kelvin Grove, QLD, 4059

IN ADDITION TO THE BRISBANE VENUE PLEASE REFER OVERLEAF FOR DETAILS OF REGIONAL VIDEOCONFERENCE SITES

Cost: This free lecture is being provided by the QLD DTSC at no cost to participants under funding from the Australian Government. However registering to attend the event is essential (please see registration information below).

Overview of Key Content: Ageing need not be a period of continuous decline and removal from society. Rather, greater emphasis must be placed on more productive and successful ageing. Previous models of care have focused on reducing negative outcomes however, these do not necessarily foster positive states. We believe that by eliciting a positive wellbeing focus there will be a corresponding reduction in previously recognised negative outcome measures.

This presentation will provide an overview of an innovative positive wellbeing approach to care for older people. It is influenced by the underlying principles of wellbeing, positive psychology and capabilities theory.

To Register for Brisbane venue only: Registration for this lecture closes on **Wednesday 11 February 12pm**. Places are limited – to avoid disappointment please register by clicking on the below link.
<https://register.eventarc.com/28244/17February>

Once registered you will receive a confirmation email. All registrations are via on-line only; unfortunately places cannot be reserved by return email, telephone or fax. If you experience a problem with your booking please contact us ASAP on 07 3138 3822 or qlddtsc@qut.edu.au

To Register for Regional Videoconference sites: Should you wish to attend the guest lecture at any of the regional sites, you **must contact** the person listed for that venue on the second page of this flyer.

If you would like any further information about this event please contact the QLD DTSC on
07 3138 3822 or qlddtsc@qut.edu.au

Current Ageing Research

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

How good is your balance?

We all know that poor balance increases the risk for falls but did you know that strength and balance start to deteriorate much earlier? In fact, balance deteriorates from as early as 40 years. Falls are a common problem particularly in the older population. We are conducting a study to understand what is "normal" across a range of age groups to accurately measure balance.

How to help: We need men and women in the age range of 30-80 years who are living independently within the community and do not use any walking aids (for example a walking stick).

What is being tested?

As there are many factors which influence balance we have included a number of measures in our study. In addition to assessing balance in standing, we will test your ability to detect light touch, the strength of your leg muscles, the movement range at your ankles and vision.

How much time is involved?

Testing involves just one session lasting approximately an hour-and-a-half. The study will be conducted in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences within

the University of Queensland, St Lucia campus.

What's in it for me?

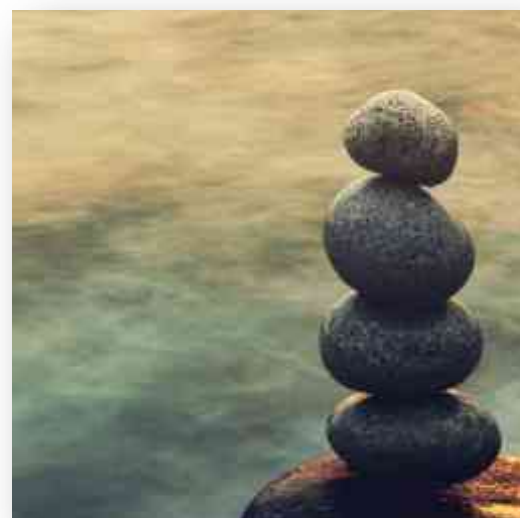
Feedback on your performance will be emailed to you after the testing session with targeted suggestions on how to maintain or improve your balance.

To ensure that we develop better diagnostic tools and treatment for balance problems for individuals your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. For more information or an appointment at a time to suit, please contact:

Mrs Jill Boughen MPhty

Email: j.boughen@uq.edu.au

Ph: 0408007156



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Healthy Participants and Participants with Neck Pain needed for Balance Study.

A PhD project at the University of Queensland is seeking both healthy participants and individuals with neck pain above the age of 60. We are investigating how neck pain may influence balance.

Participants will complete some questionnaires and perform various tests related to your neck function and balance.

You will gain a greater appreciation of your neck function and balance and feedback on your performance will be provided. The entire experiment will take 2 hours and may be conducted at your home or at the University of Queensland.

If you would like to participate in this study or would like further information,
Please contact:
June Quek
Email: june.quek@uq.net.au
Phone: 0431 005 641.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Do you take blood pressure medication?

University of Queensland and Princess Alexandra Hospital is conducting a national study on improving treatment for people with high blood pressure. If you are aged between 18 and 70 years you may be eligible to participate.

It is now well recognised that traditional measures of blood pressure, using a cuff around the upper arm, do not provide a complete understanding of the true pressures that may be experienced by the heart and other vital organs. The technology we are using involves the measurement of central blood pressure by recording the pulse at the wrist.

The study is a multi-centre, randomized trial where participant's blood pressures will be monitored over 2 years. Participants will be randomised into either usual care or the Spironolactone group.

The aim of the study is to lower central blood pressure which is expected to significantly improve cardiovascular risk. That is, central BP will be considered a more important therapeutic target than conventional brachial BP.

Each participant will receive, free of charge:

- A comprehensive cardiovascular assessment including Echocardiograph and MRI heart measures.
- Blood and urine tests.
- Blood pressure will be monitored by doctors who specialize in hypertension and

participants and their doctors will receive all clinical information

If you are aged between 18 and 70 years you may be eligible to participate.

Contact: Deborah Gilroy

Pone: 3176 6614

mail: d.gilroy@uq.edu.au

Research approved by the Metro South Human Research Ethic Committee (HREC/12/QPAH/541) and The University of Queensland Institutional Human Research Ethics (2013000313)



RESEARCH PROJECTS

IMPACT study: for Persistent Knee Pain

The Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine in the Department of Physiotherapy is conducting a study comparing two different treatment options for people over 50 years of age with persistent knee pain to find out which one works best.

What the interventions involve:

The first intervention will have access to online material about living with persistent knee pain and knee osteoarthritis.

The second intervention will have access to online material and receive seven physiotherapy exercise sessions via the internet (e.g. Skype) that includes a home exercise program, and access to an online pain coping skills training program. All treatment is offered at no charge.

Participants may be eligible if they:

Are aged 50 years or over.

- Have had pain in their knee for more than 3 months and for most days of the past month.
- Are able to commit approximately 9 months to the study
- Have an active e-mail account and home broadband access to the internet.
- Are not currently receiving physical treatment for their knee.
- Do not have systemic arthritis such as rheumatoid arthritis.
- Are not on a waiting list for knee surgery or joint replacement surgery, or have had a joint replacement on their painful side.

Contact Rachel Nelligan on
Ph 03 8344 9411 or visit the website below.
rachel.nelligan@unimelb.edu.au
To complete an online application, go to

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1461334/HOPE-Internet-Screening>



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



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

Healthy Adults for Language Study

We are seeking participants between 60-80 years of age for a study investigating the effects of normal healthy ageing on language ability. The study will assess baseline levels of speech ability using various new and standard language tasks. For example, participants will be shown images and asked to describe them in their own words. The tasks will take just over an hour and will be conducted at the University of Queensland.

For more information, please email Daniel: daniel.madden@uqconnect.edu.au Ph 0449665547

The Getting of Wisdom

Pots of gold at the end of the rainbow, the brass ring on the merry-go-round, the getting of wisdom... all of these things are considered elusive, difficult to grasp, nigh impossible! However, history and research tells us that the getting of wisdom is actually attainable, not necessarily all of the time by all of the people, but there are those among us who have been known to be wise.

PhD candidate, Leander Mitchell (University of Queensland), is therefore seeking your assistance. She and her supervisor, Professor Nancy Pachana, are looking to learn more about wisdom, in particular, the measurement of wisdom.

If you are interested in helping to discover more about the elusive concept of wisdom and how it might be best measured, please contact Leander

Mitchell for more information.

Leander Mitchell
School of Psychology
University of Queensland
St Lucia Qld 4072

Tel.: (07) 3040 8464

Email: leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.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