



Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 21 July 2014 Newsletter
www.uq.edu.au/ami

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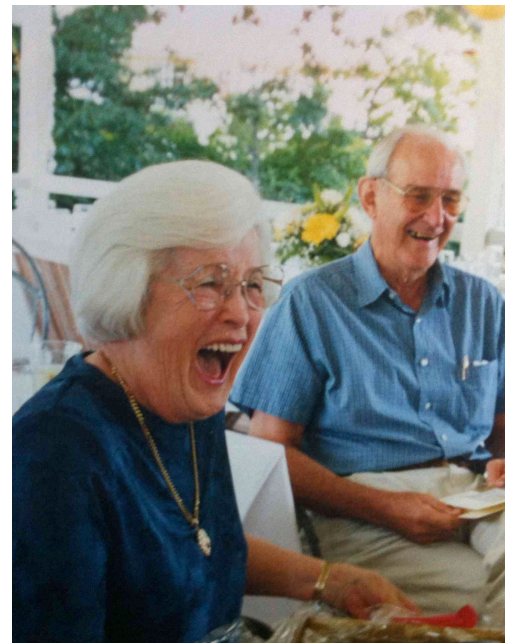
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Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of the Ageing Mind Initiative Newsletter. There are several issues covered in this Newsletter that are particularly important and are becoming increasingly topical in the ageing field of research.

Two of the stories in this weeks edition of the Newsletter provide some excellent resources for further learning and development. This includes the financial capacity in later life story (pg 2) and the elder abuse awareness story (pg6). I encourage you all to investigate these links and pass them onto others so we can all become a bit more knowledgeable about these areas.

We also have an encouraging range of new research projects to advertise. If you are interested in any of the research projects advertised in this edition, please contact the researchers directly to discuss becoming involved. Feel free to also share the details of any research projects with friends or visit our research projects webpage on the AMI Website.



ISSUE QUOTE:

Do not regret growing older. It is a privilege denied to many.
~ Author unknown

Financial Capacity in Later Life

The University of Queensland in collaboration with Paramount visitors have released a video series on Financial Capacity in later life. The series aims to assist health professionals and other persons working with older adults around issues of financial capacity.

The series follows five stories that help the viewer understand the complexity of financial capacity and ageing and that many factors including socio-demographic, cognitive, health, and psychiatric variables are all involved. It acknowledges that declines in financial capacity may be due to neurocognitive and/or psychiatric disorders and what options there are for individuals who have concerns about an older person and their financial capacity.

The series makes it clear that financial vulnerability and impaired capacity is a concern that can occur at any stage of the lifespan, however, there are some unique variables involving older adults that are worthy of consideration. It is an important

area to explore as it can be a critical element of maintaining functional independence.

The process of determining financial capacity is a complex one that can cause significant distress to all involved parties. Due to the complex nature of assessment, information should be gathered from a variety of sources including both interviews and objective data.

One easily accessible scale that can be helpful for clinicians and family members to use is the “Social Vulnerability Scale” (SVS). This scale was developed by Pinsker, Stone, Pachana and Greenspan (2006) and is an informant-report of social vulnerability for older adults. The SVS is able to effectively differentiate healthy older adults from those with a neurological condition based on proxy ratings of social vulnerability.

This series is now available on YouTube and can be accessed through the Ageing Mind Initiative Website at:

<http://www.uq.edu.au/ami/financial-capacity-in-later-life>



Upcoming Events

Registration are now open for the:
**Inaugural Annual International
Conference on Ethics, Capacity
and Abuse Prevention**

20th September, 2014

<http://capacityaustralia.org.au/event-registration/>

Announcing the Inaugural Annual International Conference on Ethics, Capacity and Abuse Prevention, to be held in Hong Kong. The conference will provide international perspectives on the assessment of decision-making capacity across a variety of domains from driving to mental health treatment and the end of life, and in a variety of settings including health and the legal and financial sectors.

Speakers from a broad range of countries will address the interaction between

capacity assessment, the promotion of human rights and the prevention of abuse, and novel research in the area of capacity assessment and abuse prevention will be showcased.

Price: A\$495

Date: Saturday, September 20, 2014

Address: The Federation of Medical Societies of Hong Kong, Duke of Windsor Social Service Building Wanchai, Hong Kong



WINTER SCHOOL PROGRAM NOW AVAILABLE



Looking for a challenge?

U3A is the University of the Third Age, which is the age of active retirement, coming after the age of youth and work and home making. University is a loose term - there are no academic requirements for membership and no exams!

U3A is a worldwide self-help organisation promoting learning for personal enjoyment and satisfaction. Visit the website to explore your options

<http://www.u3abrisbane.org.au/>

Unpacking the Sandwich Generation

With advances in health care and medical science our lifespan has become longer and longer. Generations ago the diseases to look out for would shorten a person's life by 20 years, now the issues people face in older adulthood are slower, degenerative ailments. Many of these can hinder, slowing mobility or even affecting memories and capacity. As more people enter older adulthood, the care that is required increases, many turning to their now adult children for support.

At the other end, today's children are taking more time to become independent. Because of the financial crisis and more years spent in education children are remaining in the family household for longer. After finishing university or finding fulltime jobs it is common for children to remain in the family nest. Even after leaving the family household children still rely on their parents for emotional and financial support. This means that parents today often provide care to their young adult children as they take more time to become independent.

These two factors, the older generation requiring more care and the younger generation requiring more care, means that middle-aged people today are caught between the needs of their aging parents and their growing children – this situation of being caught in the middle has earned them the title the “Sandwich Generation.”

To gain a greater understanding of the new emerging family dynamic, we at the University of Queensland conducted two streams of research. The first was an online survey, which assessed Sandwich Generation member's psychological health. The survey found that while respondents raised many issues related to intergenerational difficulties, these issues did

not translate into heightened psychopathology. The sample of Sandwich Generation members did not suffer from a higher degree of depression, anxiety, stress, or fear of social interaction. The online survey did however find a significant deficit in the Quality of Life reported by Sandwich Generation members as compared to the general population.

The second stream of research was a series of open focus groups, where Sandwich Generation members could freely raise the intergenerational related issues they experienced. Five main areas of concern were raised across all of the focus groups. Time was raised as both a positive and a negative; focus groups reported that a lot of their time was need to assist their parents and their children, but others spoke of the assistance they get from their parents and children helping out with things like errands and household chores.

Financial was largely a negative area of concern; with greater financial burden being endured due to care costs of parents and supporting adult children, though in some cases financial issues were shared and adult children, in particular, contributed to family costs in the form of board payments.



Unpacking the Sandwich Generation (continued)

Disagreements was another area of concern that was negative; focus groups reported a great amount of arguing with parents and adult children, contributing so their stress levels. Support was the most positive area of focus, with many members reporting support coming from their partners, their children, and their parents, in times of need; even many reporting that simply having family around them helped them through the day. Probably the most interesting area of concern was Guilt; Sandwich Generation members mentioned guilt in both generational directions, reported guilt around not raising children who could achieve independence, and guilt about decisions concerning the decision of potential aged care placement of their parents.

The research conducted helps us better understand the Sandwich Generation, both

their psychological difficulties and the issues of concern in their lives. Though they do not appear to be at increased risk of psychological conditions, they do report many areas of stress and concern. Perhaps most interesting is that many areas of concern raised the Sandwich Generation members could potentially be a positive or a negative depending on the individual family.

Whether the heightened reliance between the generations made for higher conflict or more support, financial strain or financial assistance, time burden or sharing responsibilities, depended on how each individual family interacted and navigated the issue. This represents a great potential for changing the nature of Sandwich Generation families through helping the families interact and work together in a more mutually beneficial way.



Elder Abuse Awareness

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) took place on 15th June, with awareness being raised on this often undetected issue.

The United Nations (UN) designated this day to focus global attention on the problem of physical, emotional, and financial abuse of elders. It also seeks to understand the challenges and opportunities presented by an ageing population, and brings together senior citizens, and their caregivers, national and local government, academics, and the private sector to exchange ideas about how best to reduce incidents of violence towards elders, increase reporting of such abuse, and to develop elder friendly policies.

Currently, the world is undergoing significant demographic changes. Estimates indicate that by 2050, the global population of people above the age of 60 will exceed the number of

younger people. These changes have led to a worldwide recognition of the problems and challenges that face the elderly. Research has shown that elderly abuse, neglect, violence, and exploitation is one of the biggest issues facing senior citizens around the world. World Health Organization data suggests that 4 to 6 per cent of elderly suffer from some form of abuse, a large percentage of which goes unreported.

The purpose of the WEAAD is to encourage communities to recognize the problem of elderly abuse, and for countries to create policies that foster respect for elders and provide them the tools to continue to be productive citizens.

Find out more information here at the National Center for Elder Abuse (NCEA):

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/>



You are invited to join the Communication Research Registry

What is the Registry?

A list of people who would like to be involved in research that aims to improve services for people affected by a communication difficulty.

People with communication difficulties may find it hard to hear, speak, understand, read, write and/or sign. A communication difficulty can be caused by: hearing loss, stroke, head injury, Parkinson's disease, dementia, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, cancer and many other factors. A communication difficulty can have a profound impact on a person's life making it difficult to do activities that many take for granted.

Research is needed to find the best ways to help people affected by a communication difficulty. To do this research **we need your help!**

Who can join the Registry?

1. People who have a communication difficulty. For example, people who have communication difficulties as a result of hearing loss, stroke, head injury, dementia or Parkinson's disease.
2. Family members and friends of people with a communication difficulty.
3. Members of the public who are interested in communication research.

People from all over Australia are invited to join the Registry.

What will happen if you join the Registry?

- You will be invited to do research.
- You will be invited to tell us about research that is important to you.
- You will receive a free newsletter each year.
- You may meet others who are affected by a communication difficulty.

How can I find out more information or join the Registry?

Visit our website: www.crregistry.org.au

Contact us: Telephone: (07) 3365 2089

Email: crregistry@uq.edu.au

The Communication Research Registry is proudly supported by:



Current Ageing Research

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

Making and challenging wills in contemporary Australia.

Are you part of a blended family? Do you have an adult child with cognitive impairment? Do you have substantial international assets? Do you have a mixture of assets such as multiple properties and shares valued over \$3 million? Have you made a conscious choice not to make a will and are aged over 45 years?

If **ANY** of these questions apply to you we are seeking your participation in a study aiming to enhance understanding of the processes involved in will making, the basis of

inheritance, principles behind asset distribution in wills and knowledge of intestacy (dying without a valid will).

Participation involves completing a face to face or telephone interview (up to an hour), at a time and location convenient for you.

Details: Cheryl Tilse
Ph (07) 3365 3341
Email: c.tilse@uq.edu.au or

Rachel Feeney
Ph (07)3346 9090
Email: r.feeney@uq.edu.au).



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Healthy adults males needed for Parkinson's disease research.

We are conducting a study to find out how Parkinson's disease impacts brain activity for cognition and language processing. In order to complete this research, we are currently seeking **healthy adult males over 50 years of age who are right handed**, have English as a primary language, with no history of neurological disease, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation in the research will involve a brainwave recording session (EEG) while you do some computer-based language tasks. For this EEG recording, a netted cap is fitted on the head which records brain activity while you do the language tasks.

During another testing session you will also be asked to do some general thinking and language assessments whilst your brain activity is not being recorded. The testing will occur at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research, Herston.

You will receive \$30 as a reimbursement for the time and travel involved in participation. Overall, participation in this project is expected to take 1-2 sessions lasting approximately 3-4 hours.

If you live in Brisbane and are interested in knowing more about this study, please contact Dr Anthony Angwin at email a.angwin@uq.edu.au, or phone (07) 3346 7460.

Word selection in people with Parkinson's disease.

Most adults have around 50 000 different words in their vocabulary - how are we able to choose which ones we want to use so quickly when we speak? And how is this process altered when our brain is affected by disease?

Both healthy volunteers and individuals with Parkinson's disease are needed to participate in an fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) study. This research will investigate how language production is affected by Parkinson's disease.

We are seeking healthy older adults over the age of 50 years, who are right handed, have English as their first language, and have no history of neurological disease, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation will involve an assessment session at The University of Queensland's Centre for Clinical Research (based at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital, Herston). You will be asked to perform several thinking, memory and language tasks. A separate fMRI brain scan at the Centre for Advanced Imaging, based at the University of Queensland St Lucia Campus, will also be required. During this session you will complete a language task while your brain is being scanned. Overall, participation in this project is expected to involve two separate sessions, lasting a total of up to 5 hours. Participants will be reimbursed \$30 for participation in the fMRI scan and transport reimbursement will be provided as required.

To learn more, please contact Megan Isaacs (07 3346 5579) or email m.isaacs@uq.edu.au

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Retirement Planning for **Couples**



Recruitment for Couple Interviews

What does your ideal retirement look like?

Planning for retirement with your partner can be good for your retirement and relationship.

Angie Ho, together with Prof Kim Halford, are conducting interviews with couples who will be retiring within the next 5 - 10 years to understand topics of interest for retirement.

What you and your partner will be doing:

1. Pre-interview online screening questionnaire (5mins)
2. Online/ face-to-face couple interview (1h)
3. Post-interview online questionnaire (3 mins)

You and your partner have to be:

Australian or Australian PR, aged 50 to 70 years, and at least one of you is engaged in some form of paid work.

Reimbursement:

\$40 Coles voucher upon completion.

To indicate your interest or for enquiries, please contact:

Angie Ho
School of Psychology
University of Queensland

Email: SILVERFOX.UQ@gmail.com

www.uq.edu.au/ami

Tel: 042 0303 014



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Seeing things your way

We are looking for healthy adults over the age of 65 years to participate in our research that is looking at how we perceive emotional expressions and interactions.

Participation will involve having 2 pairs of small sensors attached to your face while you view some video clips and images presented on a computer screen. The sensors simply stick on the skin with tape and although you may feel like you look a bit funny, you won't feel anything uncomfortable.

In addition, you will also be asked to fill in a few brief questionnaires, and complete some puzzles. This experiment will be conducted at the University of Queensland St Lucia campus and will take approximately 90 to 120 mins to complete.

You will be reimbursed \$30 for the time and travel involved in participation.

If you are interested in participating in this exciting research or would like more information please contact Sarah on:
Ph- 0423734605 or
email- sarah.grainger@uqconnect.edu.au.

Survey for healthcare personnel who provide care for older people

The Qld DTSC is funded by the Australian Government to provide dementia education and training for health professionals involved in the care of people living with dementia and their families. To help inform this work, we would appreciate your help by completing a short online survey.

The study is being led by researchers from QUT (Professor Elizabeth Beattie and Dr Catherine Travers), and is sponsored by the Queensland Dementia Training Study Centre (Qld DTSC). We are conducting a survey to better understand the symptoms of dementia displayed by veterans and non-veterans and to determine whether the symptoms differ in the two groups.

The survey is anonymous and should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. It will be open for completion from 18/06/2014 until 31/07/2014 and can be accessed by clicking on this link:

<http://survey.qut.edu.au/f/180590/1dab/>

Your participation in this survey will assist us to determine whether there are important differences in the symptoms of dementia experienced by veterans and non-veterans. This, in turn, will assist the Qld DTSC to determine whether there is a need to develop educational activities and resources to support the needs of health care professionals caring for veterans with dementia.

Should you wish have any questions about this study, please contact me via email.

Catherine Travers
dtsc.veterans@qut.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Exploring New Measures in Psychology

PhD candidate Leander Mitchell is exploring a range of new measures and how well they resonate with Australian's aged 50 years and over.

The accurate measurement in psychology of various qualities and aspects of people plays an important role in both research and clinical practice, helping to guide treatment and rehabilitation processes.

This research project involves participation in focus groups, in which the participants will be

asked to discuss and offer feedback on three new measures: a measure of wisdom, a measure of naming, and a measure of anxiety.

If you would like more information about this project, please contact:

Leander Mitchell

Tel.: (07) 3040 8464

Email: leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.au



How much do you know about ageing in Australia?

The University of Queensland, in conjunction with James Cook University and the University of Southern Queensland, is conducting a study looking at knowledge of ageing in Australia. The aim is to validate a measure of knowledge about ageing that has been adapted for an Australian population.

Around the world, the population is ageing. Unfortunately, this does not necessarily mean that knowledge of ageing is increasing. We are therefore looking to assess how well the Facts on Ageing Quiz (Australian adaptation) measures knowledge of ageing. Such measures help guide training of people who

work with older adults to make sure that their skills and knowledge are of an appropriate standard.

If you decide to take part in this project, you will be asked to complete an online-based survey that includes some questions about you, as well as 25 multiple choice questions that relate to older adults and ageing. We expect that it will take around 30 minutes to complete.

Use the following link to go directly to the survey:

http://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6G2QsrnkVebscmN

Or if you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

Leander Mitchell. Tel.: (07) 3470 4432

Email: leander.mitchell@usq.edu.au

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Dementia and Driving: Balancing Safety and Independence.

- **Are you thinking about what your options would be if you stop driving?**
- **Have you recently stopped driving and would like more information on transport options?**
- **Do you have a relative with dementia who's still driving?**

The decision to stop driving can be a difficult one. Driving is a way to access healthcare, go to the shops and to stay connected to family, friends and the community. Giving up driving can be a deeply personal and emotional issue.

Openly talking about the changes around driving during the early stage can help with the decision to stop driving.

Clinical Psychologist Raychelle Sidhu, is currently working on a guide to help drivers with cognitive impairment and their caregivers address the issues of driving, and develop alternatives to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

If you, or someone in your family has mild to moderate cognitive impairment or dementia and have concerns regarding driving, you are invited to participant in this study.

It would involve individual sessions over 4 weeks, 1.5 hours per session to address concerns regarding driving cessation and

developing coping strategies. The researcher would conduct these sessions in your home, if preferred.

The program looks at addressing driving issues, coping with the loss of driving, and planning and maintaining lifestyle through developing alternative transport options. The program was developed by multidisciplinary team including occupational therapist, psychologist and doctors.

If you are interested in becoming involved in developing a tool to help people with dementia cope with giving up driving you could contact:

Raychelle Sidhu
School of Psychology
University of Queensland

St Lucia Qld, 4072

Tel: 0468 654 559

Email: raychelle.sidhu@uqconnect.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Healthy Adults for Language Study

We are seeking healthy adults between 60-80 years of age for a study investigating the effects of ageing on language ability.

The first stage of the study aims to add to our understanding of these age related effects by assessing baseline levels of speech ability. This assessment will take approximately two hours and will use various new and standard language tasks. For example, participants will be shown images and asked to describe them in their own words.

The second stage of the study aims to assist in developing interventions to rehabilitate and enhance language functioning in healthy older adults. This stage will involve

guided practice of language tasks, with or without the addition of non-invasive brain stimulation to increase responsiveness to practice sessions and optimise learning. This will include two short sessions of transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS), a safe, non-invasive stimulation technique.

Volunteers can choose to participate in one or both stages of the study.

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



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 at june.quek@uq.net.au or 0431005641.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Use of a Smartphone for Hearing Aid Management

A common and often isolating health problem is hearing loss. The main treatment for hearing loss is a hearing aid. However, a large number of people are unable to use or manage their hearing aid. As a result, they have ongoing difficulty hearing and communicating with family, friends, and others.

This study will examine if a specially designed Smartphone app can help people with hearing aid management and troubleshooting. The app is the first of its kind. It was developed by a large hearing aid manufacturer called Phonak with input from researchers at the University of Queensland. The aim of the study is to see if people are able to use the app to help them perform tasks with their hearing aid (e.g., change the battery).

For this study, we are seeking the help of adults who are aged 60 years or over, are confident in managing a Smartphone and **have not** used a hearing aid. It does not matter if you have a hearing loss or if you don't.

What would I need to do?

You will need to attend a 1 to 2 hour appointment. This can be either at the

University or in your home. All transport and parking costs will be covered. You will also receive a \$25 Coles/Myer gift voucher as a small token of our appreciation. You can have your spouse or someone-else with you at the appointment if you wish. The appointment may be video recorded.

At the appointment you will be required to:

- Perform some tasks with a hearing aid using a Smartphone app. For example: turn the hearing aid on and off.
- Answer some questions on what you liked and didn't like about the Smartphone app.
- Complete four short assessments that examine your use of written health information, memory, finger flexibility and movement, and hearing.

Interested in participating?

If you would like to participate or have any questions, please contact us either by email or phone.

a.caposecco@uq.edu.au

Ph: 0403 497 094

b.timmer@uq.edu.au

Ph: 0415 902258



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**