

# Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 20 February 2014 Newsletter

[www.uq.edu.au/ami](http://www.uq.edu.au/ami)

## FEATURE STORIES

Perceptions of residential aged care 2

Exercise and health 3

## RESEARCH UPDATES

Upcoming events 4

Book reviews 5

## RESEARCH PROJECTS CURRENTLY RECRUITING

Neuroplasticity and ageing 6

Educational Tourism 7

Word selection in Parkinson's disease 8

Making and challenging a Australia 8

Healthy Adults for Parkinson's Disease Research 9

Ageing in Australia 9

What is Wisdom? 10

Healthy Adults for Language Study 11

Watermemories Swim Club 12

Page

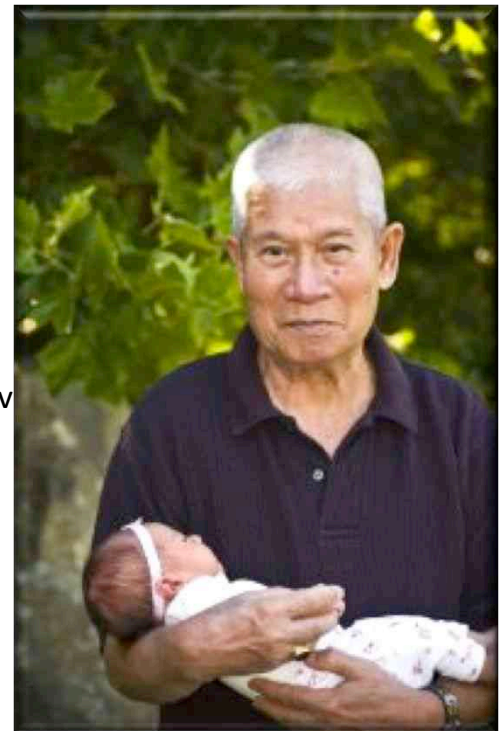
Welcome to the first edition of the AMI newsletter for 2014. With the new year we have a new fleet of research projects to become involved in. As always, if you are interested in any of the research projects advertised in this edition, please contact the researchers directly to discuss becoming involved. Feel free to also share the details of any research projects with friends. An easy way to do this is by visiting our research projects page on the AMI website:

<http://uq.edu.au/ami/research-projects>

If participating in research is not a possibility for you at present, feel free to look at our feature stories, upcoming events or book reviews.

If you have any questions for the Ageing Mind Initiative team, please email them through to:

[ami@uq.edu.au](mailto:ami@uq.edu.au)



### ISSUE QUOTE:

Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul

~ Samuel Ullman

## Feature Story

### Perceptions of Residential Aged Care

Residential aged care (RAC) is a term for a range of services required by older persons (generally 65 years and over (or 50 years and over for Indigenous Australians)) with a reduced degree of functional capacity (physical or cognitive) and who are consequently dependent for an extended period of time on help with basic activities and daily living.

RAC is frequently provided in combination with basic medical services (such as help with wound dressing, pain management, medication, health monitoring), prevention, reablement or palliative care services (Woods, Fitzgerald, & Macri, 2011).

In Australia the Aged Care Act (1997) outlines the accreditation standards which primarily charts the four main areas of operation for residential aged care - management systems, staffing, and organisational development, health and personal care, residential lifestyle, and the physical environment and safe systems. Each standard consists of a statement of a principle, a set of indicators, and expected outcomes (Woods et al., 2011).

The experience of ageing is seldom a common thread of conversation for those under 50 years old. Anecdotally there seems to be specific views held regarding the process of ageing, the elderly and RAC. These views shape our perceptions of RAC.

Large bodies of research demonstrate that specific characteristics can have a raft of effects on older people in RAC, specifically those with dementia. With an increasing ageing population (in Australia presently three million however estimated to grow to six million by 2040), this may generate consequences for our health system. The individual characteristics of both professional

carers and the general public have been cited as an essential factor that will influence improvements necessary in care and services for RAC facilities to avoid negative outcomes for the health system (Miller, Oldham, & Geschwind, 2008).

The current research is aimed at assessing the gap in the literature with respect to the perceive ideas of RAC held by the general public. Specifically, whether attitudinal, emotional, spiritual, social and health responses in the context of RAC vary with particular individual characteristics. Pre-conceived ideas of RAC may influence the structural (environment and design) and organisational cultural (management ethos, philosophy of care and caregiver attributes) that facilitate the quality of life and care for those in RAC. Knowledge of these perceptions could determine by what means improvements are addressed in the management of care and quality of life for older people in RAC and other care environments. Ultimately, we believe that these findings will contribute to the quality of life, care and operational functions associated with RAC and their residents (McCarthy, 2012).

Hence the potential consumer perspective is of utmost importance.

We are running an online survey which consists of several different measures.

If you wish to participate, or inquire about preliminary findings as they become available, please do not hesitate to contact the project staff,

Nicole Walker

Email: [na.walker@uqconnect.edu.au](mailto:na.walker@uqconnect.edu.au)

Phone: 3365 4496).

## It's never been better to Stay Active

It is well known that regular exercise is associated with a range of health benefits including reducing your risk for many chronic illnesses. But how beneficial is exercise if you start late in life? BBC News Health recently reported that yes, exercise started later in life still has significant benefits to your health.

A study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine followed 3,500 healthy people at or around retirement age. Those who took up exercise were three times more likely to remain healthy over the next eight years than their sedentary peers. Exercise cut the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and depression.

People who took up exercise in their 60s were also less likely to struggle with day-to-day activities such as washing and dressing.

After eight years of follow-up, a fifth of the participants were defined as healthy - not suffering from any major chronic mental or physical illness. This group was largely made up of people who always exercised and relative newcomers to exercise.

Few were people who did no exercise at all. Doing regular exercise throughout your life is ideal, say the researchers, but there are health benefits to be had even if you are a late starter.

Lead investigator Dr Mark Hamer, from University College London, said: "The take-home message really is to keep moving when you are elderly. "It's [a] cliché, but it's a case of use it or lose it. You do lose the benefits if you don't remain active."

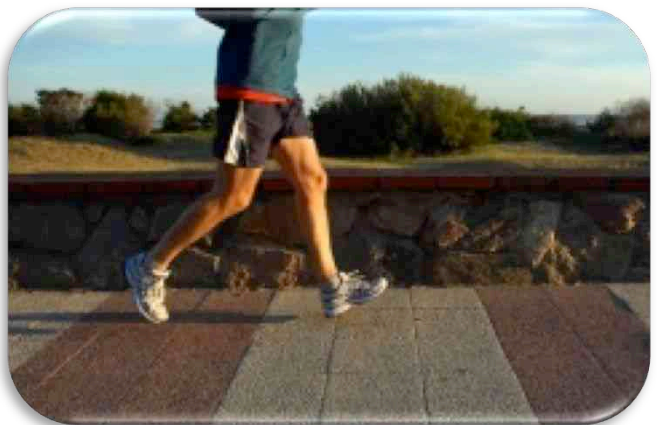
In the study, those who had regularly indulged in moderate or vigorous physical activity at least once a week were three to four times more likely to be healthy agers than those who had remained inactive, even after taking into account factors such as smoking.

Dr Hamer says physical activity does not necessarily mean going to the gym or going for a run - gardening or walking to the shops also counts. The Department of Health recommends all adults, including those over 65, do 150 minutes of physical activity a week.

Doireann Maddock, of the British Heart Foundation, said: "It's well worth getting into the habit of keeping active, as we know it can help reduce the risk of heart disease along with many other conditions. "Every 10 minutes counts, so even hopping off the bus a couple of stops early or taking a brisk walk on your lunch break will help."

Credit for this story goes to the BBC News and reference to the original article can be found by visiting the following link:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-25087047>





## Upcoming Event

### QLD DTSC Special Guest Lecture 'International Visitor'

#### 'Understanding Family Caregiving: A Stress and Coping Perspective'

Presented by Professor Bob G. Knight  
The Merle H Bensinger Professor of Gerontology, Professor of Psychology  
University of Southern California

**Date:** Tuesday 18 March 2014  
**Time:** 5:00pm to 6:30pm (Registration from 4:30pm)  
**Venue:** Seminar Room Q430, Institute for Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI)  
QUT, Cnr Musk Ave and Blamey St, Kelvin Grove, QLD, 4059

**\*PLEASE NOTE THIS GUEST LECTURE IS BEING SHOWN AT THE BRISBANE VENUE ONLY\***

**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:** This presentation will focus on Dr Knight's work in the area of the cultural differences in stress and coping models used to understand family caregiving, with work to date suggesting a common core model that links behavioral problems of the person with dementia to: perceived burden; avoidant coping strategies; emotional distress; and, subjective physical health outcomes. This common model is elaborated in different ways across cultural groups studied to date, which have included African Americans, Latinos, and Korean Americans, as well as cross national comparisons with caregivers in Korea and in Spain. Future aims for this line of research include further refinement of the sociocultural stress and coping model with special attention to discrepancies between biomarker indicators of stress and self-reported effects; the development of measures of group-specific cultural values related to caregiving; and the development of an intervention for caregivers rooted in the sociocultural stress and coping model.

**To Register for Brisbane venue only:** Registration for this lecture closes on **Wednesday 12 March 12pm**. Places are limited – to avoid disappointment please register by clicking on the below link.

<https://register.eventarc.com/20900/18March2014>

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](mailto:qlddtsc@qut.edu.au)

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



These dementia education sessions have been endorsed by APEC number 016091001 as authorised by the Royal College of Nursing Australia according to approved criteria. Each completed session attracts 2 RCNA CNE points as part of the RCNA's Life Long Learning Program (3LP)



Dementia Training Study Centres are supported by the Australian Government.

Queensland Dementia Training Study Centre  
Level 6 of N Block  
Queensland University of Technology  
KELVIN GROVE QLD 4059

T 07 3138 3822 | [www.dtsc.com.au/queensland](http://www.dtsc.com.au/queensland)



## Book Reviews

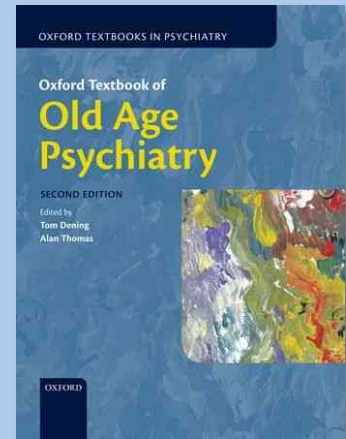
### Book Blast!

The latest edition of *The Oxford Textbook of Old Age Psychiatry, second edition* has recently been released.

Broad in scope and with global appeal it has been described as the definitive resource on old age psychiatry. It comprehensively provides the latest knowledge on the science and practice of treating later life mental disorders, focusing on the health and social issues that arise around ageing, dementia, co-morbidity, dependency, and the end

of life in progressively ageing societies across the world.

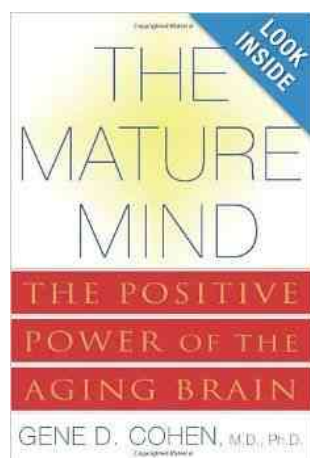
Co-founder and AMI project director Prof Gerard Byrne has written a chapter in the text entitled "Anxiety disorders in older people".



### The Mature Mind by Gene Cohen

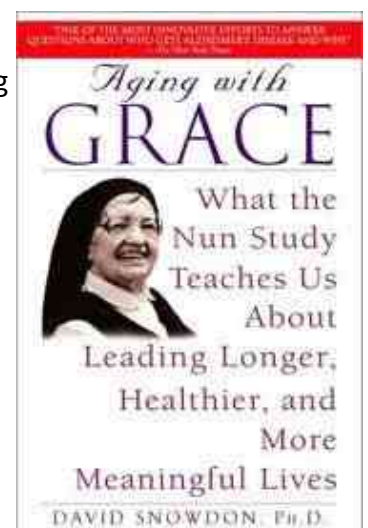
The Mature Mind delivers good news for those in the second half of life, with an extraordinary account of cutting-edge neuroscience, ground-breaking psychology, fascinating vignettes from history and case studies, and practical advice for personal growth strategies.

Gene Cohen, a renowned psychiatrist and gerontologist, draws from more than thirty years of research to show that surprising positive changes in our brains have the powerful potential to enhance, not diminish, our lives after fifty.



### Aging with Grace by David Snowdon

In 1986 Dr. David Snowdon, one of the world's leading experts on Alzheimer's disease, embarked on a revolutionary scientific study that would forever change the way we view aging—and ultimately living. Dubbed the "Nun Study" because it involves a unique population of 678 Catholic sisters, this remarkable long-term research project has made headlines worldwide with its provocative discoveries. Yet *Aging with Grace* is more than a ground-breaking health and science book. It is the inspiring human story of these remarkable women—ranging in age from 74 to 106—whose dedication to serving others may help all of us live longer and healthier lives.





# Current Ageing Research

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

## **Queensland Brain Institute at the University of Queensland is seeking participants over 65 years of age for a study investigating neuroplasticity.**

We invite you to participate in our research and help us understand more about how the ageing process affects the way in which the human brain changes itself. We are looking for right-handed males and females over 65 years of age with no existing neurological disorders, to participate in a study investigating neural plasticity in motor (movement) regions of the brain.

### **Background and Aims of the Project:**

This research aims to increase our understanding of how the human brain changes itself. Such change, or plasticity, plays an important role in normal brain functioning and is critical for recovery from brain injury. We are investigating how ageing affects the plasticity process. The present research uses a technique known as transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), which allows non-invasive stimulation of a small area of the brain that can be used to investigate plasticity. Results obtained from this research are expected to add to our understanding of how the brain normally works, and to assist in the development of more effective forms of management and rehabilitation for elderly individuals who have experienced brain injury.

### **What is required of you?**

We will ask you to participate in two separate sessions, lasting approximately 2 hours each. You will be asked to perform a simple motor task using the right hand, before and after which you will experience non-invasive brain stimulation. The experiment will be completed at the Queensland Brain Institute, which is located at the St Lucia campus of The University of Queensland. No physical medical procedures or samples are involved. You will receive \$40 as a reimbursement for the time and travel involved in participation.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Daina Dickins  
Queensland Brain Institute  
University of Queensland  
St Lucia QLD 4072  
Email: [d.dickins@uq.edu.au](mailto:d.dickins@uq.edu.au)  
Phone: 0418853625



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Would you like to share stories of your educational and cultural travel experiences?

Are you 50 years or older and, in the last 12 months, have participated in at least one domestic or overseas educational and cultural packaged tour? If so, you are cordially invited to participate in our study to understand the travel motivations, experiences and perceived benefits for older Australians of educational and cultural packaged tours. This study also seeks to understand how educational and cultural travel experiences enhance older travellers' learning and contribute to meaning in their daily lives.

In this context, educational travel is defined as an organized trip led by a skilled guide where leisure-travel activities and a learning process occur simultaneously through interactions

between related stakeholders as part of the total experience. Types of educational travel include: (1) Gastronomy & gourmet; (2) Wine, art, music (3); Adventure, nature, sports; (4) Cultural, heritage, nostalgia (5); Language, history, archeology; and (6) Intergenerational.

If you would like to volunteer for this study, please contact me to arrange an interview time that is convenient to you. The interview will be conducted face-to-face or through telephone/Skype/FaceTime, and is expected to last approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

I do look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Lintje Sie  
UQ Business School (Tourism Cluster)  
Email: [l.sie@business.uq.edu.au](mailto:l.sie@business.uq.edu.au)  
Telephone: 04811 66489



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### 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](mailto:m.isaacs@uq.edu.au)

### 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 or email: [c.tilse@uq.edu.au](mailto:c.tilse@uq.edu.au)) or Rachel Feeney (ph (07) 3346 9090 or email: [r.feeney@uq.edu.au](mailto: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](mailto:a.angwin@uq.edu.au), or phone (07) 3346 7460.

### 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](http://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6G2QsrnkVebscmN)

For more information, please contact:  
Leander Mitchell  
Tel.: (07) 3470 4432  
[leander.mitchell@usq.edu.au](mailto:leander.mitchell@usq.edu.au)



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### What is Wisdom? What does it mean to be Wise?

Have you ever wondered what it takes to be a wise person? What characteristics make one person wise and another not so wise? How do you even know if a decision you make is wise or not? And why do we want or need to make wise decisions anyway?

Wisdom is hailed as one characteristic of humans that can improve with age. Research also suggests that wisdom is something that can contribute to a person's sense of wellbeing and overall life satisfaction. It is something that develops across our lifetime based on the experiences we have lived and allows us to "give back" to those around us.

Researcher Leander Mitchell is currently exploring wisdom as part of her PhD project and in this initial study is looking to characterise wisdom from the perspective of Australia's multicultural population.

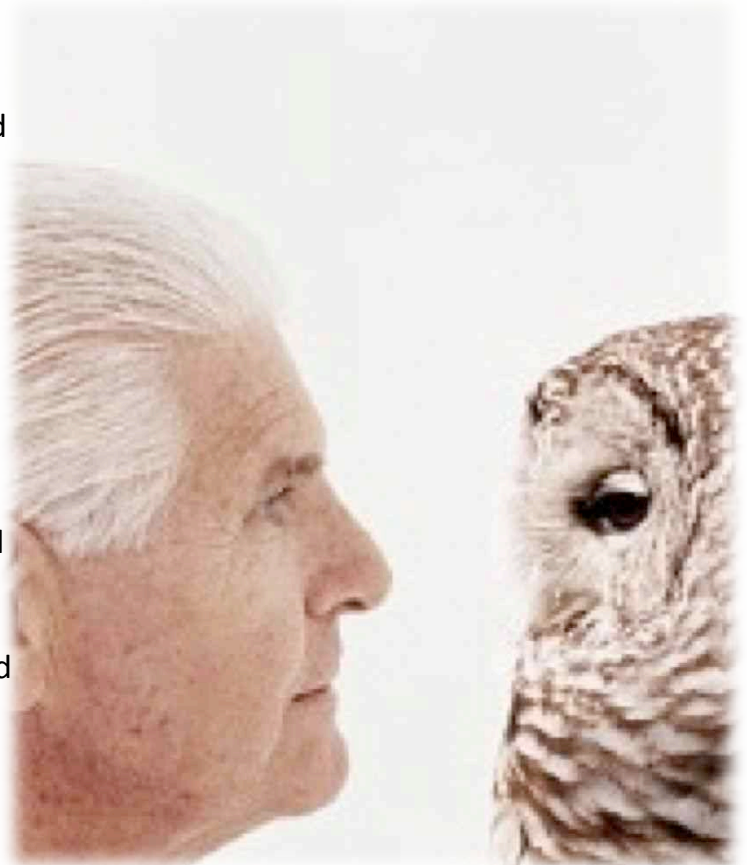
If you are currently living in Australian and are aged 50 years and over, you are invited to participate in this study (even if you don't think you are particularly wise yet!). You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire including a range of questions about the characteristics and qualities of wisdom (a paper version of the questionnaire is also available if preferred). It is expected that the questionnaire will take around an hour to complete and it can be completed in the comfort of your own home.

You can complete the online version of the questionnaire by copying the following link into your web browser:

[http://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_9KQFCsOuFdy4mxf](http://uqpsych.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9KQFCsOuFdy4mxf)

Alternatively, if you are interested in becoming involved in defining wisdom but would like to receive more information about the study or would like to receive the questionnaire via the mail, please contact:

Leander Mitchell  
School of Psychology  
University of Queensland  
St Lucia Qld 4072  
Tel.: (07) 3365 5050  
Email: [leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.au](mailto:leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.au)



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Healthy Adults for Language Study

We are seeking healthy adults over 65 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 both stages of the study or just the first stage if they prefer.

This is a new study and we are currently preparing for recruitment. If you are interested in participating you can sign up for a wait list via email and you'll be contacted with more information once participants are required. There is no obligation to participate by signing up and participants can withdraw from the study at any time.

To sign up, please email Daniel:  
[daniel.madden@uqconnect.edu.au](mailto:daniel.madden@uqconnect.edu.au)  
Phone: 0449 665 547





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Watermemories Swimming Club

#### Seeking for participants for the Watermemories Swimming Club in Ipswich and Toowoomba

The University of Queensland (UQ) has been implementing the Watermemories Swimming Club (WSC) for people with dementia since 2011. The project team consisted of dementia experts and exercise physiologists who devised a dementia-specific aquatic exercise program based on best available evidence.

The team established that an aquatic exercise program for people in residential aged care is a simple, safe, healthy, non-invasive, inexpensive, enjoyable and effective option to improve the quality of life for people with dementia.

With the Dementia Community Support Grant from the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing in 2011/2012 and a research grant from Alzheimer's Australia in 2013, over 100 people from various aged care facilities and family homes have used the services of the program since its inception.

This 2014, Heritage Bank – Toowoomba and Ipswich Hospital Foundation have granted funding for UQ to support the continuous implementation of the WSC as a community

activity for people with dementia who reside in Toowoomba, Ipswich and the surrounding districts. Members can attend two, 45-minute sessions per week for 26 weeks per year delivered by a trained instructor (this time period covers the warmer months and outside of school holidays).

**With this, we are very delighted to invite people with dementia and their carers to participate in the WSC.**

For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact:

**Angelique Zamora**

**Phone: (07) 3381 1076 or (07) 3381 1165 or**

**Email: [angelique.zamora@uq.net.au](mailto:angelique.zamora@uq.net.au) .**



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