

THE 45 AND UP E – NEWS



Issue 3
August 2007

www.45andup.org.au

Welcome to the third issue of the **45 and Up E-News**.

Study progress

Since October 2006 the infrastructure for the 45 and Up Study has been further established. A total of 36,645 individuals have been recruited to the Study and have given informed consent for follow-up and linkage.

The Study has received ethical approval to be included in the Master Linkage Key for the NSW Centre for Health Record Linkage. This linkage will mean that certain health events and use of health services will be updated automatically for study participants, including cancer registration, hospitalisation and death.

The Community and Consumer Committee has been convened, chaired by Betty Johnson. This committee will provide comment and advice on issues of participant and potential participant interest relating to the 45 and Up Study.

First paper from the 45 and Up Study accepted for publication

The first paper from the 45 and Up Study has been accepted for publication as a 'Cohort Profile' in the International Journal of Epidemiology. This paper outlines the background to the study, its methods and the characteristics of the first 36,645 participants.

New study partner - DADHC

We are very pleased to welcome the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) as a new Study Partner. We look forward to working with DADHC to ensure we make the best use of the Study to understand important issues such as the impact of ageing on people with disabilities and their ageing carers, use of aged care services, residential aged care admissions, impaired functional capacity, chronic disease, disability and trajectories of care for ageing Australians. DADHC joins our other Study Partners: The Cancer Council NSW; the National Heart Foundation (NSW Division); NSW Health and beyondblue.

New study supporters – the MBF Foundation, the Baxter Charitable Foundation and the Alma Hazel Eddy Trust

We are very pleased to acknowledge the MBF Foundation who has agreed to fund a three-year Policy in Action Roundtable for the Study. This Policy in Action Roundtable will comprise senior policymakers from relevant government and non-government organisations. It will oversee the development of annual work plans that will use data from the Study to rapidly produce policy-relevant results that will directly inform the provision of health services for older people in Australia.

Announcing a one year grant of \$50,000, the Baxter Charitable Foundation and the Alma Hazel Eddy Trust, both managed by Perpetual Ltd, join Freehills and the Macquarie Bank Foundation as supporters of the 45 and Up Study.

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The 45 and Up Study Research Network

At the last 45 and Up Study Collaborators' meeting, the Collaborators agreed to move from the existing system of theme committees to a Research Network. All existing collaborators are considered members of the 45 and Up Study Research Network, which will include:

- Regular email updates on study progress and research within the cohort;
- Invitations to the annual 45 and Up Study Collaborators' meeting, Study workshops and events;
- A dedicated website area, with information about how to use data from the Study for research;
- Provision of assistance regarding technical details of the Study for grant applications.

In addition to this, the 45 and Up Study will have regular forums relating to cancer, cardiovascular disease, mental health and aged care to facilitate research relevant to the priorities of Study Partners.

If you know a colleague who might be interested in joining the Research Network or would like more information, please contact Nicol Herbert on (02) 9514 5944 or email nicol.herbert@saxinstitute.org.au.

Projects using 45 and Up Study data

To date, 18 research proposals have received in principle approval to use data from the Study. Six projects have been funded and have been given approval to receive de-identified questionnaire data from the Study. Seven are awaiting outcomes of funding applications. The groups and projects planning to use data from the 45 and Up Study are broad, demonstrating the value of the Study to diverse disciplines and areas of research, including:

- Sun exposure and its correlates
- The relationship between oral health, diet and systemic health outcomes
- The correlates of poor memory, mental health and wellbeing in ageing: are they different in the old-old (aged > 80 years)?
- Understanding risk factors for cancer
- Economic impacts of disease on older workers: costs to government and individuals and opportunities for intervention

A group of 19 collaborating researchers has also been awarded an NHMRC strategic grant of \$1.8 million over 5 years to investigate social, economic and environmental factors in relation to health and ageing. This project will involve re-surveying the first 100,000 individuals recruited to the Study.

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Using the Study for research projects

Researchers can conduct research using the Study by applying through the 45 and Up Study Scientific Advisory Committee. The Committee wants to facilitate as much high quality research as possible and is keen to receive proposals to use the resource. Revised policies to guide access and charges for using the Study data are in the final stages of development and will be available shortly.

In brief, the process for applying to use data from the Study and the associated charges depends on the type of data researchers want to use:

- For **questionnaire data only** – Researchers are asked to submit a brief application form to the Study Scientific Advisory Committee, pay the appropriate charges and sign a data use and confidentiality undertaking. A CD-Rom containing de-identified baseline questionnaire data from the first 36,645 individuals recruited to the Study is currently available. These data broadly include: measures of health status and past medical and surgical history; known risk factors for major causes of morbidity and mortality; likely confounding factors; potential mediators of risk; and some novel factors. The questionnaires can be viewed at www.45andup.org.au, under “publications”.
- For **linked data** or projects involving **re-contacting sub-groups of the cohort** – there is a two stage process:
 - **Stage 1** - Preliminary Access Approval allows researchers to gain in-principle agreement to conduct their research project within the 45 and Up Study; this early stage approval is designed to support applications for competitive research funding.
 - Researchers whose projects have funding and appropriate ethical approval can apply directly for **Stage 2** - Full Approval to Access Study Data. Following approval of Stage 2, researchers will work with Study staff to receive the appropriate access to data and other elements of the Study to meet the needs of their specific project.

Any queries regarding data access or charges, please contact Sonia Wutzke, Director Policy and Operations on 02 9514 5943 or email sonia.wutzke@saxinstitute.org.au

Collaborators' meeting

The fourth annual 45 and Up Study Collaborators' meeting will be held on Thursday 20 September, from 10am-3pm at the Scientia Building, UNSW. There will be a presentation on obesity in cohort studies by Professor Eugenia Calle, Director of Analytic Epidemiology with the American Cancer Society, as well as updates on Study progress and research underway within the cohort. There will also be workshops on research using data from the Study to investigate cancer, cardiovascular disease, co-morbidity and mental health and policy relevant outcomes. Collaborators and other interested people are welcome to attend. If you would like to attend or need more information please contact Nicol Herbert on 02 9514 5944 or email nicol.herbert@saxinstitute.org.au.

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Rolling recruitment – the way forward

Commencing in July 2007 further recruitment to the Study will be on an ongoing basis. Randomly sampled individuals identified through Medicare will be invited to attend, with approximately 40,000 recruitment packs mailed each month. In addition, we are still welcoming people wanting to join the Study by volunteering to take part. Anyone wanting to join the study is asked to call the Study helpline on 1300 45 11 45. It is expected that a total of 100,000 individuals will be taking part in the Study by the end of 2007 with the full 250,000 recruited by the end of 2009.

Further Information

If you would like to know more about any of the above, please contact Sonia Wutzke on 02 9514 5943 or email sonia.wutzke@saxinstitute.org.au

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