

Welcome to CogCoach-Health

Researchers at UNSW Sydney are running a new dementia risk reduction trial and are seeking participants through health professional referrals. The study is for adults 65+ with subjective cognitive decline or mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and tests an innovative program to support healthy brain ageing through lifestyle changes. While based in Sydney, the program is delivered online, so participants can join from anywhere in Australia.

About the trial:

- Education and professional support in physical activity, nutrition, and cognitive and social engagement to reduce dementia risk.
- Delivered remotely via computer or tablet (tablets can be provided by the study team), with some basic digital comfort required. Support is available for volunteers with lower literacy or less experience with technology, though some familiarity is required.
- Evidence-based, designed to become a time-efficient dementia risk reduction resource for clinicians.

This document is intended for health professionals and outlines the study, eligibility criteria, and what participation involves. Also, a short suggested script (below) is included that you can use to briefly introduce the study to patients.

Suggested wording for patients (optional)

"Researchers at UNSW Sydney are looking for people who [are experiencing some changes in their memory or thinking OR have a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (MCI)] to take part in a study called CogCoach-Health.

This trial tests a lifestyle program that is designed to support changes in key areas for brain health - these include staying physically active, eating well, keeping your mind active, and staying socially engaged.

The program is delivered fully online, so volunteers can participate from anywhere in Australia.

If you are interested, [we can fill out an Expression of Interest (EOI) form together on the computer OR here is a brochure/flyer with the research team's contact details]."

Who can take part? (inclusion criteria)

Researchers at UNSW are conducting the online CogCoach-Health intervention to test its effectiveness compared to information provided by email. CogCoach-Health is tailored for people reporting cognitive difficulties. It is an online e-learning course designed to support healthy brain ageing and reduce the risk of dementia.

The research study is looking to recruit people who meet the following criteria:

- Changes in memory or thinking (subjective cognitive decline (SCD)) or a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (MCI)
- 65 years of age or older
- At least one of the following risk factors: insufficient physical activity, poor diet or low levels of cognitive engagement.
- Ability to read, write and communicate in English to a comfortable level
- Willingness to complete an online course, lifestyle factors questionnaires and interviews over phone/video call
- Willingness to nominate a friend, family or carer who is willing to provide information about their memory and thinking and their everyday behaviour at the beginning and the end of the study.

Who cannot take part? (Exclusion criteria)

Participants meeting the following criteria will be excluded from the study:

- Diagnosis of dementia
- Medical condition or treatments that would impact participation in the trial (to be discussed during screening)
- Already engaged in a similar healthy ageing or brain health trial*.

**Participants enrolled in the study will be asked not to participate in any other similar healthy ageing research throughout their involvement (15 months from enrolment). If unsure whether a different trial makes them ineligible for CogCoach-Health, they are encouraged to discuss this with the CogCoach-Health research team.*

What participants will be asked to do

All participants will be asked to complete the following research activities if they agree to participate:

- Once they consent to participate in the study, the researchers will contact participants by phone for a *screening interview* to determine whether the study is right for them. The screening interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

- If the study is right for them, participants will first be asked to complete the *baseline assessment* by phone or video call with a researcher. This will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.
- Participants will then be randomised by a computer either to the 'CogCoach-Health Intervention group' or to the 'Email information group'.

Participants randomised to the **intervention group** only:

- Participants will be provided with access to the CogCoach-Health **e-Learning modules**. Participants will be asked to complete the six CogCoach-Health modules online within 12 weeks. One module will be released/unlocked at a time (about one module every two weeks). The length of each module is about 20-30 minutes; however, completion of each module can be done in multiple sittings and participants have control of how often and how long they are accessing the modules within the 12-week intervention time.
- Participants will be contacted by phone or videocall (depending on the participant's preference) by a researcher with at least 4 years' training in psychology or equivalent degree (during Week 1), an exercise physiologist (during weeks 5 and 9), and a dietitian (during weeks 7 and 11) to tailor the information learnt in the CogCoach-Health modules to their personal circumstances. Each consultation will last for up to 45 minutes. If required participants will be offered additional resources (e.g., StandingTall app, PhysiTrack app) as part of their exercise and diet consultations.
- Participants will receive access to a 12-month subscription to computerised brain training (BrainHQ), apps to support physical activity, and access to ongoing phone support for the duration of the e-learning. Participants have control over how often and how long they are using the app within the designated subscription time, and how often and how long they access phone support.
- Participants will receive an email bulletin every 2 to 4 weeks with information on maintaining brain health and behaviour changes from months 4 to 12.

Participants randomised to the **Email information group**:

- Participants will receive six fortnightly email bulletins with basic information pertaining to each of the topics of the CogCoach-Health modules over 12 weeks. Reading the information in each of these bulletins will take about 10-15 minutes; thus, the overall time commitment for participants is up to 1½ hour over 12 weeks.

All participants will then be asked to complete:

- After the initial 12 weeks of the CogCoach-Health intervention, all participants will be contacted by phone or videocall (depending on the participant's preference) for three follow-ups. These will occur immediately, 6 months, and 12 months after the receipt of the CogCoach-Health intervention or email bulletins. Each assessment will take about 1-1.5 hours to complete.
- All participants will be asked to nominate an Informant who interacts with them at least on a monthly basis and who has known them for 10 years or more. The researcher will contact the

informant by phone or videocall twice during the study period (at baseline and at the end of the study) to provide supporting information about the participant's cognition and behaviour.

- As part of a cost-effectiveness analysis, participants will receive a separate information sheet and consent form about access to Medicare health data.

A timeline of the research activities is shown on page 4 of this document. A full description of all research activities, including any risks, harms or discomforts that you may experience while participating in this research is included in the *Participant Information Statement and Consent Form*.

Timeline of research activities

