



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM
1000 ELDERS

The Birmingham 1000 Elders



**Ensuring people enjoy,
not endure, old age**

**For more information visit our website:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/1000elders**

The Birmingham 1000 Elders – playing a key role in Healthy Ageing Research

Medical advances are enabling people to live longer, with current evidence suggesting that 1 in 4 adults in the UK will be aged over 60 by the year 2050. While healthcare is prolonging lifespan it is now clear that the period spent in good health, healthspan, is not increasing at the same rate. We are living longer but not healthier.

The Birmingham 1000 Elders is a group dedicated to bringing researchers and older adults together to carry out research in to how we can age more healthily. Based at the University of Birmingham, the 1000 Elders aims to reach out to adults over the age of 60 to take part in and share the findings of research activities that seek to improve the quality of life in old age. The Birmingham 1000 Elders thus play a key role in ensuring that people enjoy their old age, not endure it. Led by Professor Janet Lord, the Birmingham 1000 Elders

group is an essential resource for the University's Healthy Ageing Researchers. From direct involvement in research studies as subjects through participation in focus groups that help design and shape the studies, 1000 Elders are key to helping us to understand how to maintain good health in old age.

As with any research, the results are only as strong as the participants. If you are over 60 and in good health, the Birmingham 1000 Elders needs you!



A little bit of history...

The Birmingham 1000 Elders group was formed in the early 1980s by Professor Bernard Isaacs, Professor of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Birmingham. Professor Isaacs believed in the importance of involving local people in research activity at the University and also recognised those people as a valuable resource for that research.

The Birmingham Elders today

Following the success of the group, the volunteers' activities have expanded over the years to complement the medical research at the University, including research into heart disease, cognition, infections in old age and falls. The involvement of the group has been crucial to the research activity of the University and, in particular, to the work carried out relating to health in old age.

Research projects that the Birmingham 1000 Elders participate in feed directly (but not exclusively) into the University of Birmingham's MRC Arthritis Research UK Centre for Musculoskeletal Ageing Research, which aims to understand how ageing results in loss of musculoskeletal function and to use this knowledge to minimise age-related decline and disease.

Initially, the Birmingham 1000 Elders were involved in research that used questionnaires to find out about all aspects of life as an older adult in the UK, looking at issues such as health, housing, social activity and pensions. Today they are involved in a wide range of studies all related to understanding how to age well.



How the Birmingham 1000 Elders are helping to ensure people enjoy, not endure, old age

As a Birmingham Elder, you will be asked to participate in real-life research projects that are making life-changing advances. Here are just a few of the projects that have used the 1000 Elders to make a real difference.

Statins help to save lives through pneumonia treatment

We know that statins – drugs used to lower cholesterol – help to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke as we age. However, thanks to research supported by our Elders, we have discovered a whole new way to treat pneumonia.

Research led by Professor Janet Lord and Dr Liz Sapey had been trying to understand why older adults are more susceptible to infections such as pneumonia and also why they are sicker than young people when they do get these infections. The first study looked at an immune cell called the neutrophil, which is one of the main cells in the body that fights the bacteria that cause pneumonia. Using blood donated by healthy young adults and members of the 1000 Elders, we showed that the function of the neutrophil was reduced in the older adults and that the damage they cause was greater in older people.

While looking at ways to improve neutrophil movement, we found that statins in blood from 20 selected members of the Elders group helped their neutrophils move towards bacteria as well as those of a young person!

The final test was to see if statins would also work in patients with pneumonia. We found that after just seven days of statins the patients had neutrophils that moved better and most importantly we had fewer deaths in the statin group. So with the help of our Elders, we have found a very new way to treat pneumonia patients and reduce deaths from this common disease.

Lights, Camera, Medicine! Elder DVD stars recommend exercise regimes for hospice patients

In our modern society we are increasingly inactive and this only gets worse as we get older. Also, as we reach old age, or when we are ill either with a chronic disease such

as rheumatoid arthritis, or with life-shortening conditions such as cancer, we are not sure which exercise to do to achieve the biggest benefit.

As part of our research, we assessed which exercises are best for making sure we do not lose muscle mass or strength as we age and identified resistance exercise as important – without good muscle strength you cannot easily get out of a chair, or a car, or get off the toilet, which ultimately leads to the loss of independence.

Working with our Elders and in collaboration with 'Move it or Lose it', we tested which exercises worked best and made our own exercise DVD (Put PEP in your step!) and a book of the same exercises (Stay Fit for Life). Filmed in one the Elder's homes with fellow Elders as actors, the DVD and book are much more user-friendly for an older adult. We then took the exercises to a hospice and after just eight weeks the



residents' mental health and physical function improved. St Giles hospices in Staffordshire now use our DVD and exercise programmes.

Depression after a hip fracture makes your road to recovery longer

Hip fracture is a common physical stressor in older adults, with almost 80,000 over 65-year-olds falling and fracturing their hip each year. The immune system functions less well in old age, and stress, whether physical or psychological, can suppress the immune system making adults more susceptible to infection. Depression often develops in older adults with hip

fracture and may affect the recovery of walking independence. A study with Professor Janet Lord, Professor Anna Whittaker and Drs Jane Upton and Niharika Arora set out to consider whether the stress of a hip fracture would further reduce the efficacy of the immune system in older adults and if the presence of a psychological distress (depression) would make immune and physical function even worse.

The main findings were that depressed hip fracture patients were less able to engage in activities of daily living than non-depressed patients at six weeks and six months and that depressed patients also had poorer balance and spent a significantly longer entire length of stay in NHS facilities (including rehabilitation units).

'The 1000 Elders were invaluable...'





The 1000 Elders were invaluable, with volunteers helping us in a number of ways throughout the study, including editorial input around patient communication, piloting the physical function measures and taking part in the study as healthy control participants by providing a blood sample. Also, they were instrumental in providing feedback on the findings of the study and offered valuable opinions on plans for upcoming or ongoing research.

Are you sitting (un)comfortably?

The modern world is an increasingly sedentary one and we aimed to identify the acute effects of different periods of sitting time on physiological (body) and psychological (mind) function in older adults aged over 70 years. The study led by Dr Carolyn Greig and Dr Sandra Agyapong-Badu, measures how sitting affects certain

aspects of thinking and memory, mood, muscle power, blood pressure and stress levels as we want to better understand what happens to us while we are relatively inactive and particularly while we are sitting.

Most of the participants in the study are members of the Birmingham 1000 Elders group and preliminary data shows potentially significant changes in a number of measures (especially blood pressure), especially after four hours of sitting. The results of this project will also provide effective practical advice for older adults and for those who work with them, specifically about the effects of length of sitting time on mind and body. We hope that these findings may lead to an improvement in clinical practice by incorporation into future policy guidelines for older people and one of our Elders has told

us that as a result of her participation, she now has a good reason to not sit about for too long!



Healthy Ageing – get involved!

Research on healthy ageing at the University of Birmingham is changing lives. However, this success is not possible without the involvement of our local community.

Any adult aged 60 or over and in good health can become a member of the Birmingham 1000 Elders. Being a member of the group is a great way to share your experience and help to make a difference to the way we live our lives.

What does being a member involve?

By joining the group, you register your interest in taking part in research projects at the University. Often this may involve simply answering a questionnaire, although many studies require participants to come to the University to take part. Sometimes members are asked to take part in

focus groups or to review written materials such as reports or grant proposals. Some projects are mentally stimulating, others may involve some physical activity. Either way, all projects will have been approved by an ethics committee and you are free to accept or decline any invitation to take part.

How often will you contact me?

If you provide us with an email address we will send you regular updates and information about new volunteering opportunities, seminars and other events, direct to your inbox. If you don't have an email address we will contact you via your postal address or telephone number when

suitable research opportunities arise. We try not to inundate our members with too many emails and we screen our communications so we only send out relevant content.

What sort of research activities can I take part in?

Whether it's exploring how ageing affects our brains, the impact of inactivity on our bodies, physical management of knee or hip osteoarthritis, or being involved in a film for the BBC, the types of activity that we invite you to take part in are many and varied. Some projects pay you for your time; all expenses will be covered.





What is Agewell?

Agewell is a free annual event where we get the chance to say a big 'thank you' to all the Birmingham 1000 Elders for the support they give to our research projects over the last year. It is also our way of feeding back to you our research results and to offer you the chance to take part in interactive sessions focusing on healthy ageing.

How do I get involved?

Joining the Birmingham 1000 Elders is simple. All you need to do is fill out and return the application form on page 11 of this booklet. This will provide us with contact details, basic personal information about you and some brief lifestyle information that will help us identify relevant research projects. The details are kept on a secure database so that members

can be contacted to participate in research studies at the University of Birmingham.

Agewell is a free annual event where we get the chance to say a big 'thank you' to all members of the Birmingham 1000 Elders group for the support they give to our research projects. It is also our way of feeding back to our members our research results. The day-long event is host to a series of short talks delivered by world-leading researchers which

cover a wide variety of topics related to healthy-ageing. Agewell is also our opportunity to showcase our ongoing and upcoming research projects through an interactive poster session where you can 'Meet the Researcher' and ask any questions about the studies or about being a volunteer. We also facilitate a series of engaging small group activity sessions all of which focus on healthy ageing.

'help to make a difference to the way we live our lives'



Birmingham 1000 Elders privacy notice

This page provides information about how the University of Birmingham (the 'University') uses your personal data while you are a member of the Birmingham 1000 Elders group. It is important that the personal information we hold about you is accurate and current. Please keep your personal information updated during your relationship with us.

What personal data will be processed?

We collect information about you when you join the group by completing an application form. We also collect additional information during your membership. The information we collect includes, but is not limited to:

On the application form:

- Name, title/s and full postal address
- Contact details such as email addresses, social media links and telephone numbers
- Your date of birth
- Gender, description of ethnic origin, marital status, current or past occupation, and highest level of education

- Information relating to your health – chronic illness and medications
- How you heard about us
- Contact notes relating to your involvement with us for example if you do not wish to receive a newsletter

During membership:

- Information relating to events that we organise and you attend such as Agewell
- Your feedback on your dealings with us
- Any photographs you share with us or we take of you at our events (we will only take and use these photos with your consent)
- Research project specific and depends upon the research being undertaken

What is the purpose of the processing?

The University will process your personal data for the following purposes:

- communicate with you about our research projects and events
- manage our events
- contact you about opportunities to volunteer for research projects involving a member of staff at the University
- keep a record of your relationship with us, including your feedback to understand how we can improve our communications with you
- occasionally we conduct analysis of our members by post code or particular area where supporters reside to establish our geographical reach



What is the legal basis of this processing?

We process your personal data for the purposes above based on the consent you give when joining the group.

Who will your personal data be shared with?

Within the University, your data is shared with staff responsible for the managing of the Birmingham 1000 Elders group.

Based on the consent given when joining the group, we will share your contact details and relevant information on your profile with members of staff at the University that are conducting research that you may be interested in volunteering for.

How long is your data kept?

We keep your personal data as part of our records for as long as you are a registered member of the group or if the group ceases to operate.

You may withdraw your consent at any time by emailing **1000elders@contacts.bham.ac.uk** or write to:

- Birmingham 1000 Elders Administrator
College of Medical and Dental Sciences
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT

We may anonymise your personal information for using it for statistical purposes.

When your information is passed to member of staff working on a research project, your personal data will be kept by them in line with the project retention schedule, this may be determined by the funding body and will be in line with the University Code of Practice for Research. Information on how your information will be used as part of a project will be provided at the moment of contact or when additional information are collected.

Your rights in relation to your data

If you would like more information on your rights; you would like to exercise any right; you have any queries relating to the University's processing of your personal data, or you wish to make a complaint about how your data is being or has been processed please contact:

- **The Data Protection Officer**
Legal Services
The University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
Email: **dataprotection@contacts.bham.ac.uk**
Telephone: +44 (0)121 414 3916

You also have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) about the way in which we process your personal data. You can make a complaint using the ICO's website: **ico.org.uk**.



Application form

Please complete this form as accurately as possible using BLOCK CAPITALS

Name	<input type="text"/>		
Home address	<input type="text"/>		
	Postcode	<input type="text"/>	
Home phone number	<input type="text"/>	Mobile number	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>		
Date of birth	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Gender (tick boxes)	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>
How would you describe your ethnic origin?	<input type="text"/>		
Marital Status (tick boxes)	Single <input type="checkbox"/>	Married <input type="checkbox"/>	Co-habiting <input type="checkbox"/> Widow/Widower <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>
What is/was your occupation?	<input type="text"/>		
What is the highest level of education you have completed?	<input type="text"/>		
Do you have any long-term medical conditions? (tick boxes)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes please provide further details: <input type="text"/>
Do you take any regular medication? (tick boxes)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes please provide further details: <input type="text"/>
How did you hear about Birmingham 1000 Elders?	<input type="text"/>		
If you want to know how we use your information please read our Privacy Notice.			
<input type="checkbox"/>	By ticking this box I confirm that I am happy to have my details added to the Birmingham 1000 Elders database. I understand that my details will be shared with researchers associated with the University of Birmingham.		Date <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Please return your completed application form to:
Birmingham 1000 Elders, Institute of Inflammation and Ageing, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT

For more information visit our website:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/1000Elders

The Birmingham 1000 Elders

Ensuring people enjoy,
not endure, old age

These are the facts

1. Birmingham 1000 Elders helped to discover that statins help to fight pneumonia



2. Birmingham 1000 Elders starred in a new exercise DVD aimed at older people



3. Birmingham 1000 Elders took part in a study that highlighted the importance of not sitting for too long



4. Birmingham 1000 Elders aided study that proved depression lengthens recovery time after hip fracture



For more information visit our website:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/1000Elders



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