

Can a better understanding of social networks improve nutrition and physical function among older ethnic-minority adults?

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Why this study?

- The UK population is ageing and also becoming super diverse
- Ethnic minorities are at increased risk of non-communicable diseases (diabetes and hypertension)
- As a result, more ethnic minority older adults experience poorer health as compared to the general population
- Better social networks have been shown to improve healthy lifestyle choices
- So understanding how social networks impact on how older ethnic minorities eat and keep active is essential
- This could help in reducing the risk and prevalence of these diseases and save a lot of money on health care

Ethnicity and Type 2 diabetes risk

The **South Asian** population living in the UK are up to **6 times** more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes than that of the white population.

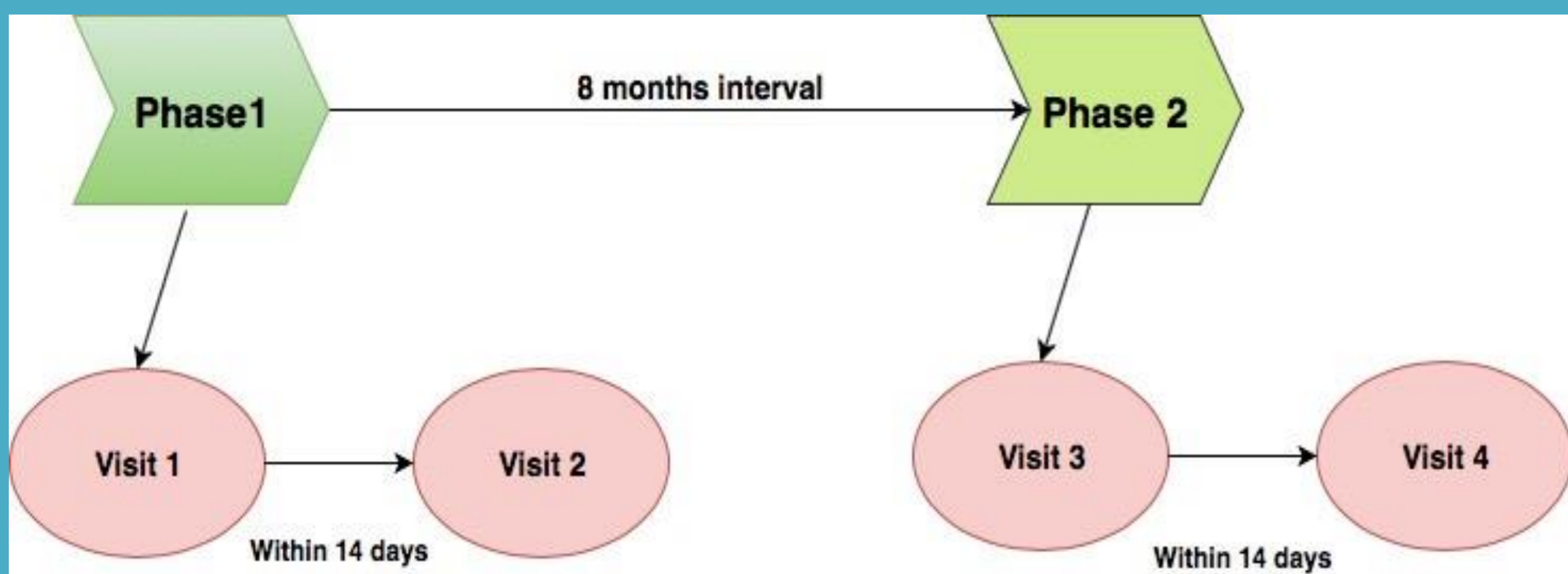
People of **African and African-Caribbean** descent are **3 times** more likely to have type 2 diabetes than the white population.

How is this study carried out?

Participants:

- 100 Ethnically diverse older adults (60 years +) were contacted and data collected.
- To participate, participants self-identify as African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Caribbean, and living in Birmingham, UK.

Process of data collection:



What is done during these visits?

Diet recall

Waist circumference

Walking, balance and getting out of a chair test (Short Physical Performance Battery)

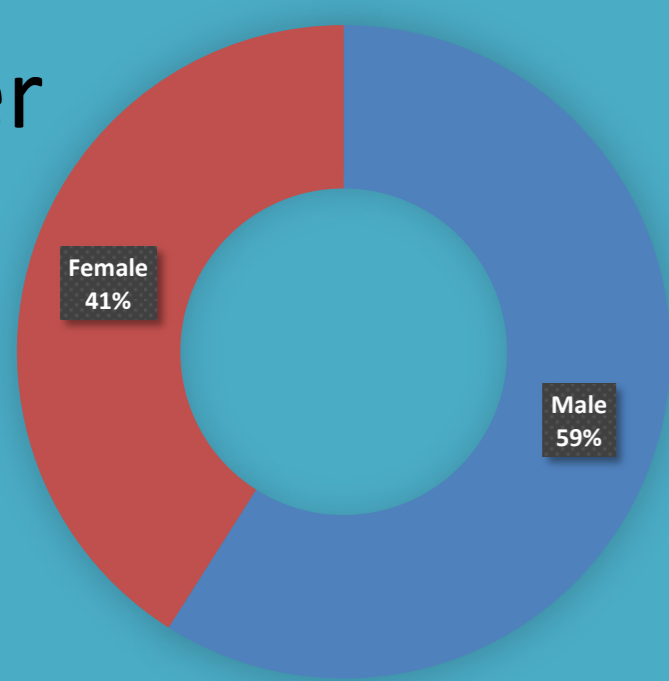
Individual Interviews

Handgrip strength test

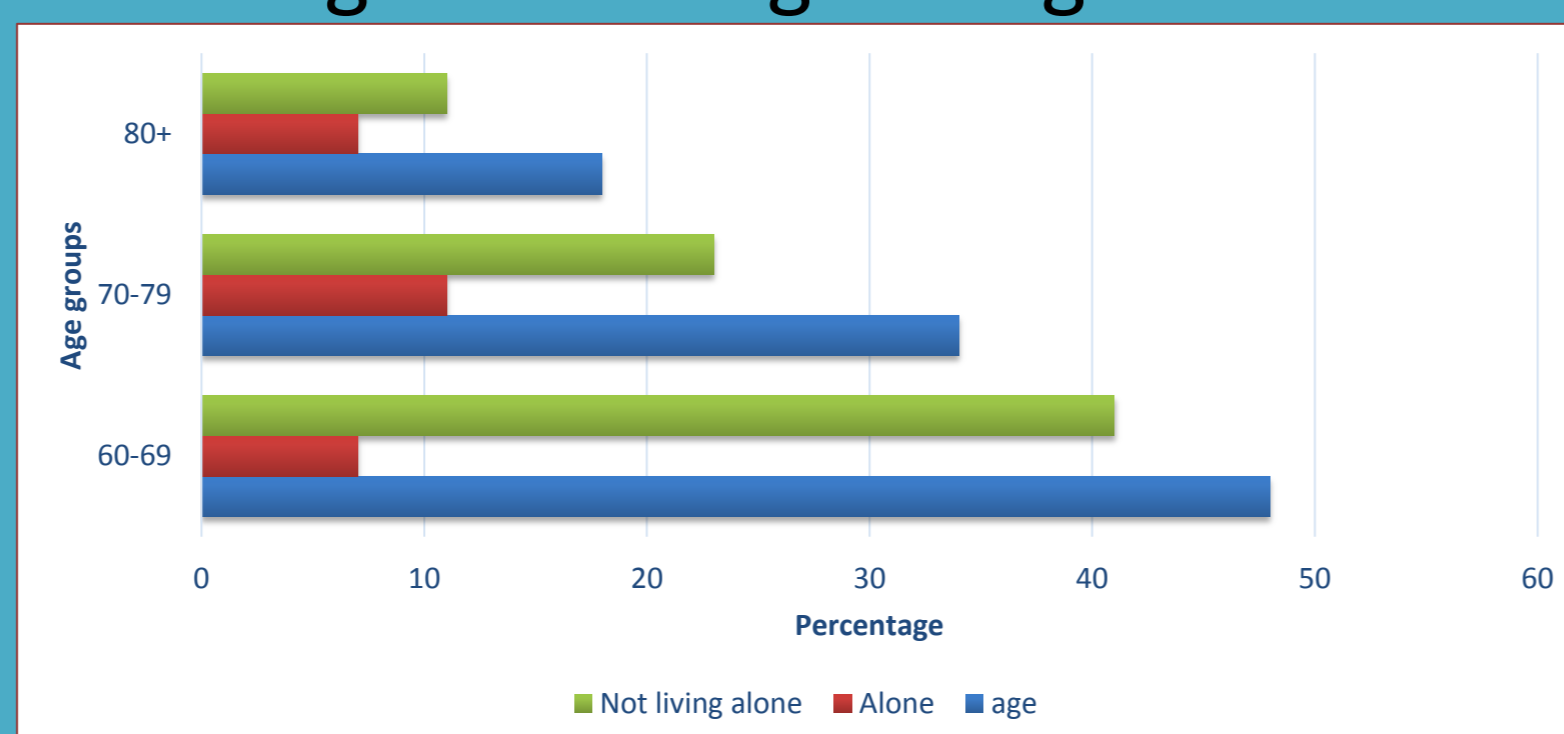
Weight and height

What have we found thus far? (Data collection 70% completed)

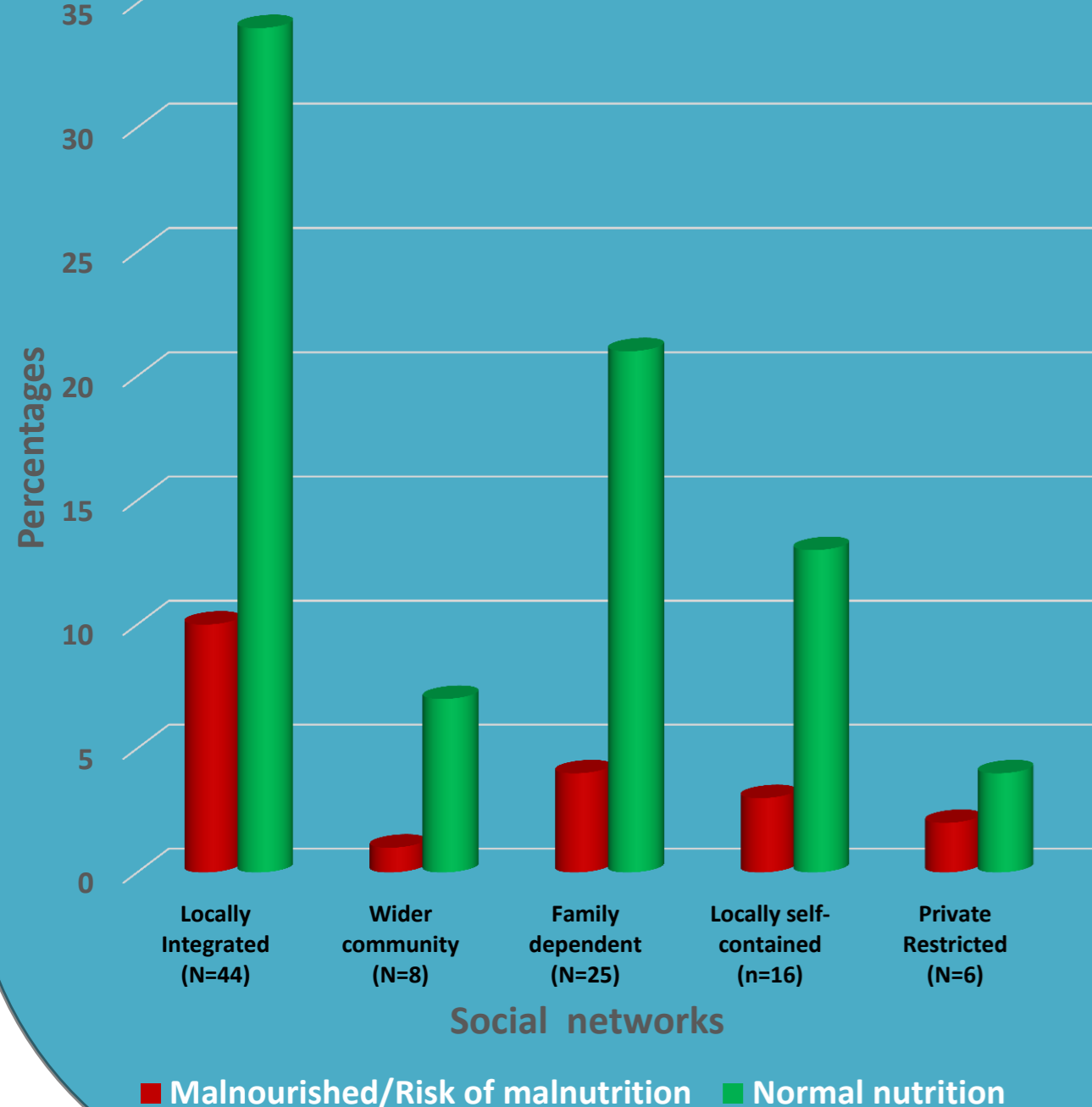
Gender



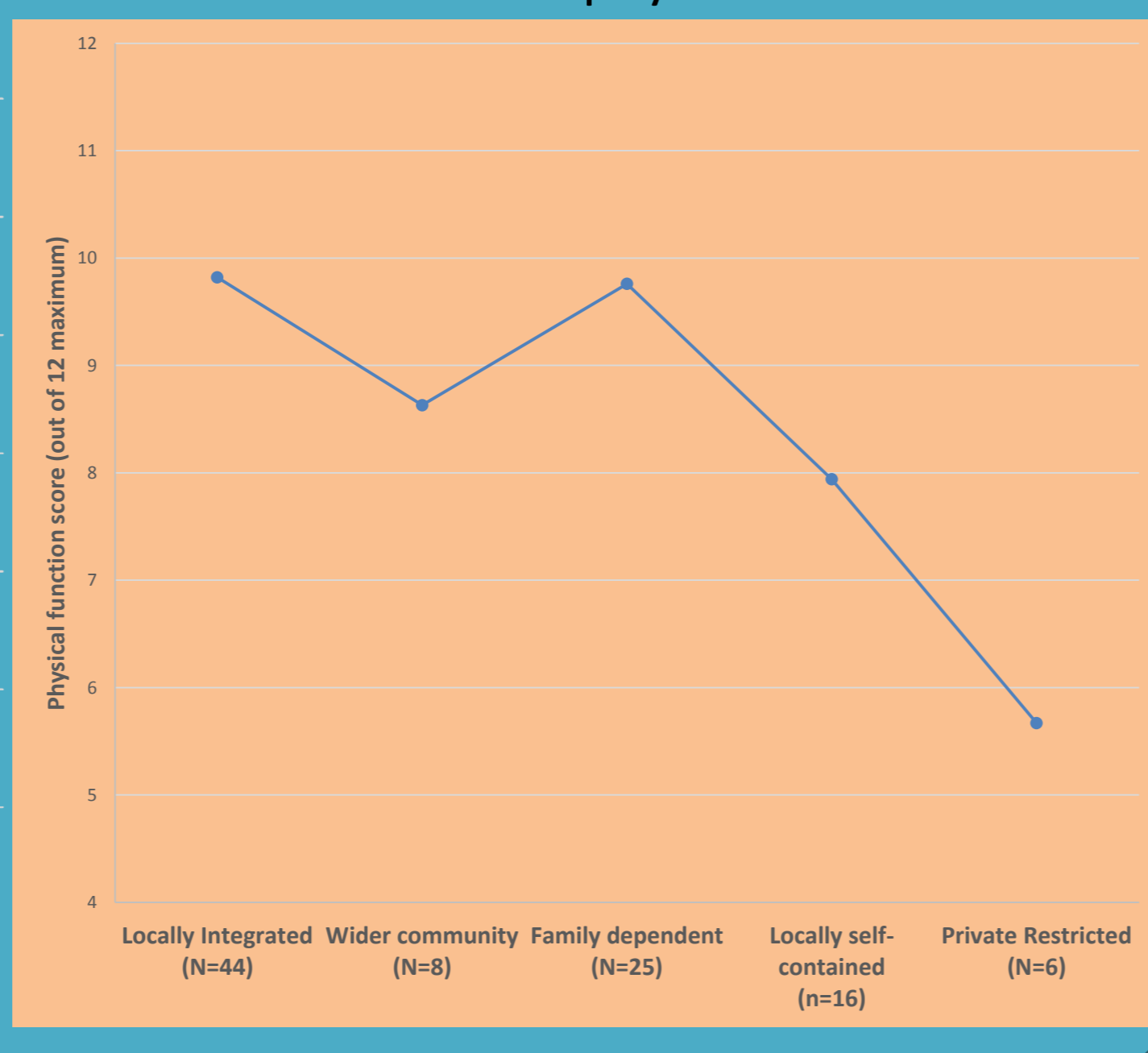
Age and living arrangements



Social ties and nutritional status

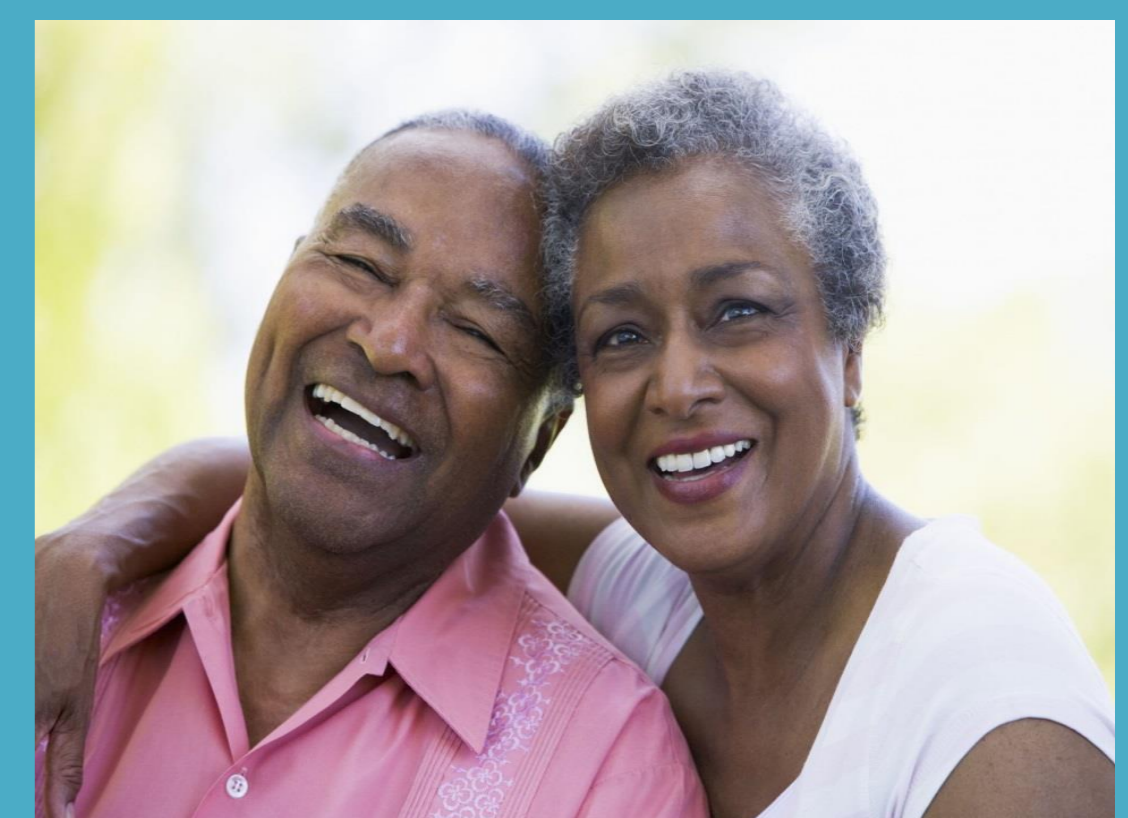


Social ties and physical function



Research impact

- These findings could be used
 - To inform on policies focusing on promoting social networks
 - To inform health professionals on strategies to improve social networks within this population
- Industries could explore the use of social networks in targeting and marketing their products



Stay tuned

