**The Hunter Community Study**

University of Newcastle and

Hunter New England Area Health Service

# Background

The Hunter Community Study (HCS) is a population-based prospective cohort study established to assess factors important in the health, wellbeing, and social functioning of older Australians. The cohort consists of participants aged 55 to 85 years randomly selected from the Hunter Region of the Australian electoral roll. Health data in the form of clinic assessments, surveys and blood samples have already been collected at baseline and participants have consented to have their data linked to health and other registers (Medicare, PBS, DVA, RBDM, NSW Cancer Register, Hunter Area Heart and Stroke Register and Area Health Service Medical Records). The HCS database contains 3253 study participants who have completed questionnaires and/or clinical assessment between 2004 and 2008. The HCS is a collaborative study between the University of Newcastle’s School of Medicine and Public Health and the Hunter New England Area Health Service.

## Information recorded on the study database includes:

* *Survey information:* demographic, socioeconomic, education, nutrition, depression, anxiety, medical and surgical history, quality of life, cognition, medication, employment, social support, tobacco and alcohol use, and spirituality.
* *Clinical information:* spirometry, blood pressure, body mass index, cognition, vision, hearing, smell, balance, bone mineral density, grip strength
* *Biochemical information:* full blood count, electrolytes, urea, creatinine, cholesterol, fibrinogen, fasting blood glucose, proteins, liver function tests

# Previous linkage projects conducted through CHeReL include:

What are the clinical and biochemical determinants of health service use by participants in the Hunter Community Study? This study involved linkage of 2763 HCS records with the Admitted Patient Data Collection, death registrations, cancer diagnoses from the Central Cancer Registry (CCR) and counts of visits from the Emergency Department Data Collection. Principal researcher: Prof John Attia, University of Newcastle.

# Availability of data for studies:

These data are available to researchers for further study subject to approval from the Data Custodian and appropriate ethics committees. For further information please contact the Data Custodian, Mrs Roseanne Peel. A list of variables available for data linkage projects can be accessed on the CHeReL website at: <http://www.cherel.org.au/external-datasets>

# Data custodian

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