

The 45 and Up Study

The 45 and Up Study is a large cohort of people in the second half of their life established as a resource for research that is internationally leading and relevant to health decision makers. The 45 and Up Study is a unique research resource.

- It is the **largest long term study of health** in Australia. More a quarter of a million men and women from across NSW aged 45 and over – about 10% of this age group – have joined the Study. The size of the 45 and Up Study means that it can be used to provide:
 - Answers to important questions more quickly
 - Information about specific groups in the community such as those with a defined health problem or living in a remote part of NSW
 - Reliable information for publication in high quality journals or to underpin health decisions
- It has **very detailed information about participants**. Participants in the Study provide demographic, lifestyle and health information through a brief baseline questionnaire and a re-survey every five years. Participants have consented to linkage of this information with other health databases for further studies such as hospital records and information about general practice visits (from MBS) and prescribed drugs (from PBS). With consent participants can be approached between routine re-surveys to give extra information about special issues. There is no other data source in Australia with such rich information about large numbers of participants.
- It has **long term follow up information** both from routine resurveys and from linkage to health records. Long term information is the only way to explore health trajectories and causality. The 45 and Up Study can be used to understand how health is changing over time, which people have improving or deteriorating health and the causes of these changes. In this way, the 45 and Up Study can be used to identify opportunities to intervene early to prevent disease or to manage it more effectively.
- It can **inform decisions about services and programs**. The rich information and large numbers of participants mean that the Study can be used to answer many questions relevant to services and programs. For example, it can help understand who is using services, whether care is in accord with recommendations and whether population programs are making a difference.
- Is managed as a **collaborative resource** by the Sax Institute. Unlike most cohort studies, the 45 and Up Study has been designed specifically as a resource to support a wide range of research. The Institute helps researchers access and use the data and also assists policy agencies to use the 45 and Up Study through our Analysis for Policy program.

The 45 and Up Study has been a research resource for more than 140 projects, involving 650 researchers across 84 organisations which to date have resulted in 242 research papers. It is also proving a valuable resource for health decision makers with 28 policy agencies planning to or using its data.

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