# BRIEF PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

# Maintaining Social Engagement study

## We want to understand how to help people aged 55+ to maintain or enhance their social engagement and their well-being.

**Who is doing the research? What is it about?**

I am Dr Suraj Samtani, a researcher at the Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney). I lead a team of researchers from UNSW Sydney, University of Queensland and Silverchain. My colleagues and I want to find out about how to help older adults maintain or enhance their social engagement and well-being.

**Can I take part?**

You can take part if you:

* Are aged 55+
* Have noticed changes in your memory or thinking OR have a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia
* Feel lonely sometimes
* Can join online sessions using a computer or tablet
* Do not have memory loss or difficulty finding words which stop you from having conversations
* Can do basic daily activities without help
* Can have conversations in English
* Can see and hear well (with glasses or hearing aid/s if needed)
* Do not have a severe psychiatric disorder (e.g., psychosis or bipolar disorder)
* Life expectancy is over 12 months
* Live in Australia

**What does taking part involve?**

These are the eight parts to this study:

1. 5 online group videocalls lasting 2 hours each
2. 3 online individual videocalls to track your progress: thinking tasks + questionnaires about your social connections, mood and well-being. These videocalls will occur before you do the first group videocall, after the last group videocall, and also 3 months after the final group videocall.

**Individual videocall to track progress**

We will ask you to:

* Do tasks and puzzles to measure your memory and thinking abilities
* Fill out questionnaires about your social contacts, mood and well-being. You can choose to do these questionnaires via an online link. Otherwise, we can ask you these questions in the videocall.

**Do I have to take part in this study?**

No, you do not have to take part. It’s your choice. Even if you say yes, you can change your mind later and stop. If you want to stop taking part in the study, please email one of the people in our research team and let us know.

**What will happen to my information?**

We will keep your information on secure, password-protected computers for 15 years after completion of the study. After that, the information will be destroyed.

Some of the group videocalls will be recorded. These recordings are to check if the person running the groups is doing their job well. These recordings will only be available to the research team and will be also stored on secure, password-protected computers. The recordings will be deleted 3 years after completion of the study.

We will keep your information private. We will not give anybody your name, contact information, or where you live. No one will know it was you who took part. The information you give us for the study, such as your answers to questionnaires, will be stored separately from your personal contact information.

We will write reports about what we find out in the study to benefit other research work and all ageing people. We can send you a summary of the study findings if you like.

**Who can I get in touch with about the research?**

If you have any questions, please ask:

Study Coordinator

Name: Dr Suraj Samtani

Phone: (02) 9348 0170

Email: [s.samtani@unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.samtani@unsw.edu.au)

If you want to complain about the research, you can get in touch with the Human Research Ethics Coordinator. It is their job to listen to you and find out what happened.

Phone: (02) 9385 6222

Email: humanethics@unsw.edu.au

Tell them this number: iRECS0834

If you feel upset after taking part, you can talk to some who supports you or call:

NSW Health – Mental Health Line

1800 011 511

**I want to take part**

We will call you over the phone on the number you gave us to discuss the study and see if you can take part. If you tell us during the call that you want to take part, we will send you the questionnaires and make a time for your first individual session.

Until then, you can email me at [s.samtani@unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.samtani@unsw.edu.au). if you have any questions or to organise the phone call. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**Dr Suraj Samtani**

Postdoctoral Fellow

Co-Director, CHeBA (Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing)

Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health, UNSW Medicine