ISRCTN11841241 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN11841241

A study to help identify depression in patients aged 65 years and older who are registered with a GP in the North of England

Submission date
14/10/2022

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
27/10/2022

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
04/02/2025

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
One in four people aged 65 years plus are depressed. Many people do not receive support or help for symptoms of depression. One reason for this is that it can be difficult for healthcare professionals to identify when a patient is depressed. The Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) is a short questionnaire or 'screening tool' that can be used to identify when someone who is older than 65 years has symptoms of depression. A healthcare professional can use this and then talk to the patient about how they are feeling and decide on a course of action.
Currently there is little evidence about whether screening people who are over 65 years with the GDS is a good way of identifying whether someone has symptoms of depression. The researchers have previously shown that when they used the GDS with older participants and told their GPs when they identified symptoms of depression, when they checked again after 6 months the severity of their depression had reduced. This study aims to find out whether screening participants with the GDS followed by alerting the GP of participants who could have symptoms of depression, improves the GDS score 6 months later.

Who can participate?
People who are over the age of 65 years, do not have a diagnosis of depression or are waiting to receive treatment for depression, are living at home (not in a residential care home), are registered with a GP practice in the North of England, and who are happy for the study team to contact their GP about their mental and physical health.

What does the study involve?
Potentially eligible patients who live in the North of England and are registered with a participating GP practice will receive an invitation in the post to take part in the study. They will be asked to complete a consent form and questionnaire and send it back to the York Trials Unit, University of York. Researchers will check that the patient is eligible for the study. If eligible, researchers will calculate the participants' GDS score and will write to both the participant and their GP to tell them their score. The participant's GP will review the GDS score and contact the

participant where necessary. After 6 months the participants will be sent another questionnaire to complete and send back to York Trials Unit. Some participants will be asked to take part in an interview about their experiences of being in the study.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
If the GDS identifies that a participant has symptoms of depression and proposes a course of action, these symptoms may be reduced. There may not be many other direct benefits of participating in this study. However, if enough people take part in the study, the results will provide valuable information about screening for depression in patients who are 65 years or more.
The researchers do not think that taking part in the study poses any additional risks for participants. For participants, taking part in the study will involve some time to complete questionnaires and possibly discussions with their GP.

Where is the study run from?
University of York (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2021 to January 2024

Who is funding the study?
The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) (UK)

Who is the main contact?
1. Caroline Fairhurst, caroline.fairhurst@york.ac.uk
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4. Ailish Bryne, ailish.byrne@york.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)
305842

Central Portfolio Management System (CPMS)
53084

Study information

Scientific Title
Case finding for depression in primary care: a regression discontinuity design CASCADE study

Acronym
CASCADE

Study objectives
Screening for depression in patients aged 65 years and older, who are living in the community and registered with a GP in the North of England, using the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) and informing the patient and their GP if the GDS score indicates symptoms of low mood or depression will reduce symptom severity six months later.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 12/08/2022, Yorkshire and The Humber - Leeds West Research Ethics Committee (NHSBT Newcastle Blood Donor Centre, Holland Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4NQ, UK; +44 (0)207 972 2504, +44 (0)207 104 8134; leedswest.rec@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 22/YH/0119

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Non-randomized; Interventional; Design type: Treatment, Screening, Diagnosis, Other

Study type(s)
Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Depression

Interventions
Participants will complete the GDS at baseline and post the questionnaire back to the York Trials Unit (YTU), University of York. Members of the research team at YTU will score the GDS and if the score is suggestive of mild to moderate depression (score of 5 or more), then YTU will write

to the participant and their GP to inform them. The GP will read the letter and decide on an appropriate course of action/treatment for the participant. For participants whose score does not indicate mild or moderate depression, a letter will be sent to their GP to inform them that their patient is taking part in the study and that the GDS score did not indicate that the patient was experiencing depressive symptoms. At 6 months, YTU will only notify GPs about new scores of 5 and over (i.e if the participant previous reported a GDS of 0-4 inclusive at baseline).

Intervention Type
Other

Primary outcome(s)
Symptoms of low mood and depression measured using the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) at baseline and 6 months

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Health-related quality of life measured by the EQ-5D-5L at baseline and 6 months
2. Health service resource use with a specific focus on mental health services, including NHS and private care, use of medications, and self-care at 6 months
3. Acceptability of the intervention to patients and care providers, and if and how screening could be incorporated in practice, assessed using interviews during the recruitment and follow-up stages of the study

Completion date
31/01/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Aged 65 years and over
2. Community-dwelling
3. Based in the North of England
4. Willing and able to provide consent

Participant type(s)
Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Senior

Lower age limit
65 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
1020

Key exclusion criteria
1. Currently have a diagnosis of depression
2. Currently receiving or waiting for treatment for depression
3. Do not consent to their GP being contracted by the research team about physical or mental health concerns

Date of first enrolment
22/09/2022

Date of final enrolment
31/07/2023

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
York Trials Unit
Department of Health Sciences
Faculty of Sciences
Ground Floor ARRC Building
University of York
Heslington
York
United Kingdom
YO10 5DD

Study participating centre
Field House Surgery
18 Victoria Rd
Bridlington
United Kingdom
YO15 2AT

Study participating centre
The Haven
Burnhope
United Kingdom
DH7 0BD

Study participating centre
Ashton Medical Group
Glebe Street
Ashton-under-Lyne
United Kingdom
OL6 6HD

Study participating centre
The Sides Medical Centre
Moorside Rd
Swinton
Manchester
United Kingdom
M27 0EW

Study participating centre
St Johns Group Practice
Greenfield Lane
Balby
Doncaster
United Kingdom
DN4 OTH

Study participating centre
Clifton Medical Centre
239 Doncaster Gate
Rotherham
United Kingdom
S65 1DA

Study participating centre
Heeley Green Surgery
302 Gleadless Road
Heeley
Sheffield
United Kingdom
S2 3AJ

Study participating centre
Mayford House Surgery
Boroughbridge Road

Northallerton
United Kingdom
DL7 8AW

Study participating centre
Posterngate Surgery
Portholme Road
Selby
United Kingdom
YO8 4QH

Study participating centre
James Alexander Family Practice
Bransholme South Health Centre
49 Goodhart Road
Hull
United Kingdom
HU7 4DW

Study participating centre
Kirkburton Health Centre
Kirkburton
Huddersfield
United Kingdom
HD8 0SJ

Study participating centre
Dunelm Medical Practice
Bearpark Medical Centre
Bearpark
Durham
United Kingdom
DH7 7DG

Study participating centre
Ecclesfield Group Practice
Sheffield
United Kingdom
S35 9XQ

Study participating centre
King Street Medical Centre
168 King Street
Cottingham
United Kingdom
HU16 5QJ

Study participating centre
Market Weighton Group Practice
Market Weighton
York
United Kingdom
YO43 3FF

Sponsor information

Organisation
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

ROR
https://ror.org/04s03zf45

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
NIHR Research for Patient Benefit; Grant Codes: NIHR203506

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets analysed during the current study will be available upon request from the Chief Investigator, Caroline Fairhurst (caroline.fairhurst@york.ac.uk), in an anonymised format following the publication of the main study results. Reasonable requests by researchers for data to conduct secondary analyses will be considered by the Study Management Group.

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article			04/02/2025	Yes	No
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes