

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

<b>Submission date</b> 14/10/2022	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
<b>Registration date</b> 27/10/2022	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Last Edited</b> 04/02/2025	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
		<input type="checkbox"/> 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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3. Laura Clark, laura.clark@york.ac.uk
4. Ailish Byrne, ailish.byrne@york.ac.uk

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Scientific

### Contact name

Ms Caroline Fairhurst

### ORCID ID

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### Contact details

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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

### Study design

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

### Primary study design

Interventional

### 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 0TH

**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](mailto: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?
<a href="#">Results article</a>			04/02/2025	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No
<a href="#">Study website</a>	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes