



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

'Diagnosis, Management & Outcomes of Depression in Primary Care'



diamond Newsletter | DECEMBER 2014

INVESTIGATOR'S NOTE



Prof Jane Gunn
diamond Study Principal
Investigator and General

The *diamond* study is fast approaching its 10th year and in the world of research that is a long time! Nine-year follow-up is in its final months. We are pleased to report that we have completed over 264 phone interviews and received over 300 surveys returned in the mail this year. We appreciate that this is a busy time of year but encourage anyone who may have a survey booklet lying around to please complete it and send it back to us at your earliest convenience.

diamond is the first study of its kind in Australia Touching base with you every year, as we have been since 2005, is critical in research – it gives us the opportunity to understand how things occur for you in the real world and makes the results of the study very influential.

The picture that we build from *diamond* goes toward improving the way doctors, nurses and other health professionals manage or approach issues people may be experiencing with their

emotional wellbeing; policy or the way governments organise and fund health care services; and other medical and health researchers.

In this newsletter we report on some of the outcomes of the research from 2014. Many of the researchers we have featured in previous newsletters are continuing to work at making sense of all the information you have given us. We hope you enjoy reading about the contribution the *diamond* study is making towards improving Australia's health and emotional wellbeing. We also highlight some exciting developments that will continue into 2015.

On behalf of the *diamond* Study Team we wish you a safe and happy festive season and look forward to your continued participation in the study in 2015.

Prof Jane Gunn
(on behalf of the *diamond* Study team)

You are what you eat

In the 2015 survey you will notice that we have included a series of questions asking about the kinds of food you usually eat. The links between what we eat and the effect on our physical health is well understood. In recent years studies have shown a link between diet and our mental health. Although we have previously asked you a number of questions about your eating patterns and changes to your diet, these new questions ask in greater detail about what you eat and how often. We hope that this will further improve our understanding. If you have any concerns or questions about this please do not hesitate to contact the study team at the University of Melbourne.



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PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH UNIT

'Your contribution to Australia's health and wellbeing is important'

What is the *diamond* research informing?

The following achievements have been possible with your participation over the years.

- Building on the research that has been underway over the past 9 years, in 2014 we worked on developing an App that will help tailor the right treatments for people experiencing depression and emotional problems. In 2015 we will be testing this with patients from general practices in a study called 'Target-D'.
- You may recall that in previous newsletters we reported on our contribution to the research of the Centre for Research Excellence in Mental Health Systems Improvement (CREMSI) which has been funded by the Commonwealth Government via the National Health and Medical Research Council. The Centre's goal is to improve the model of health care delivery for the Australian health care system. Prof Jane Gunn and Dr Sandra Davidson, have been analysing information the *diamond* study has collected about the use of health services by people who currently experience depression, stress and worry. This will inform the work towards improving health care delivery for all Australians.
- Our team delivered 12 presentations about the research at national and international conferences.



In 2014, the *diamond* research team has published 12 research reports in medical journals which present some of the results of the study. A further 4 manuscripts are being reviewed for publication. Data we have analysed and published in medical journals this year has led us to understand in more detail:

- the links between quitting smoking and changes in depression symptoms;
- the importance of personal resilience and the positive effect this has on emotional wellbeing;
- that asking a person to self-rate their own health can give us insight into many aspects of someone's physical and emotional wellbeing. Our report published in The Annals of Family Medicine makes further recommendations for GPs;
- people's use of complementary therapies to help with symptoms of depression, stress or worries. One published report describes people's use of complementary medicine and another reporting on why people use complementary therapies;
- the role that genes play in how people experience depression;
- people's experiences of accessing telephone crisis help lines. Three research reports have been published in medical journals. In 2015, further analysis of the data collected in the *diamond* Study will contribute to improvements in the way people receive support when accessing these services.

***diamond* Draw**

We are excited to announce that 5 winners have been awarded a \$100 voucher each. Another *diamond* draw will get underway in the new year. Further details about the conditions of entry will be outlined in a flyer insert together with the survey booklet. Stay tuned!

Our offices will close on the 22nd December 2014 and re-open on the 5th January 2015.

HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED, CHANGED PHONE NUMBERS...?

If your address or phone number has changed, please fill in your new details below and return to us or call us on (03) 8344 7449 with your new details.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Suburb: _____ POSTCODE: _____
Phone Number: _____

