

# PROMED-COG NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the first edition of the PROMED-COG annual newsletter providing information on the research project, news, progress, results and future plans.

## WHAT IS PROMED-COG?

The PROMED-COG (PROtein enriched MEDiterranean diet to combat undernutrition and promote healthy neuroCOgnitive ageing) Consortium brings together unique expertise to better understand how the balance between diet and physical activity could reverse undernutrition during ageing and, ultimately, prevent memory loss.



**Dr Claire McEvoy from Queen's University Belfast leads PROMED-COG as Project Co-Ordinator**

## RESEARCH AIMS

- ➔ Increase evidence and understanding of how improving nutrition can help brain health during ageing
- ➔ Better understand how a Mediterranean Diet and exercise can help nutrition and brain health during ageing
- ➔ Build collaboration and research relationships throughout Europe
- ➔ Develop evidence-based guidelines to prevent poor nutrition and cognitive decline in older adults



The PROMED-COG Consortium is made up of:

- Funding Partners & Collaborators
- Scientific Team
- Early Career Researchers
- External Stakeholders
- Patient & Public Involvement
- Project Administrator

The PROMED-COG Consortium meet annually to discuss milestones, results and communications. We look forward to our first in person meeting in 2023!

## FUNDING PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS



**Prof Lorraine Brennan**  
University College Dublin



**Prof Giuseppe Sergi**  
University of Padova



**Prof Dorothee Volkert**  
Friedrich-Alexander-  
Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg



**Dr Federica Prinelli**  
National Research Council



**Prof Lisette de Groot**  
Wageningen University

Meet the team at  
[www.promed-cog.com](http://www.promed-cog.com)

Led by Queen's University Belfast, the Consortium includes The National Research Council Italy, The University of Padova, University College Dublin, Wageningen University, and The Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg.

The PROtein enriched MEDiterranean diet to combat undernutrition and promote healthy neuroCOgnitive ageing (PROMED-COG) transnational consortium project is funded under the European Horizon 2020 Joint Programming Initiative 'a Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life' (JPI HDHL) and the ERA-NET Cofund ERA-HDHL (GA N°696295 of the EU Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme), specifically via the PREVNUT call for development of targeted nutrition for prevention of undernutrition for older adults.

## How Common Is Undernutrition And What Is It's Association With Cognitive Decline And Dementia? Preliminary Results From The PROMED-COG Project

The first activities of the “PROtein enriched MEDiterranean diet to combat undernutrition and promote healthy neuroCOGNitive ageing” (PROMED-COG) project aims to estimate the frequency of undernutrition in adult and older people and its impact on cognitive performance. For this purpose, we considered a sample of 9071 adult and older people involved in three longitudinal studies (the Italian Bollate Eye Study, the Progetto Veneto Anziani, and the Italian Longitudinal Study of Ageing) and followed over time.

Undernutrition, defined based on anthropometric and medical data, was present in 14.3% of the population, mostly among females (15.4% vs 13%) and the oldest ones (3.5% among subjects aged <60 years to 28.8% in those 85+). When considering the assessments of cognitive performance over time and the new cases of dementia, we found that undernutrition was associated with a probability of experiencing a steeper cognitive decline and of developing dementia increased respectively by 20% and 57%.

These preliminary findings suggest that undernutrition is common among older people and may affect cognitive health.

Dr Caterina Trevisan, University of Padova



[Read the first PROMED-COG publication in the Nutrition Bulletin here!](#)



PROMED-COG has 5 different work packages:

- 1: Project and consortia management
- 2: Undernutrition, cognitive decline and dementia risk
- 3: Mediterranean diet, exercise and neurocognitive ageing
- 4: PROMED-EX: Diet and Exercise Intervention study
- 5: Sharing results and recommendations

PROMED-EX is the diet and exercise intervention study on PROMED-COG forming work package 4.

In this study, researchers at the Centre for Public Health, QUB, will test the effect of a 6-month protein enriched Mediterranean diet, with or without exercise, on the risk of poor nutrition and cognitive (memory and thinking ability) decline in older adults in Northern Ireland



PhD student Nicola Ward at the Balmoral Show

## WHO CAN TAKE PART?

- ✓ Those aged 60+
- ✓ Who have noticed problems with their memory
- ✓ Eat less food than they used to
- ✓ Consider themselves to be a normal weight or underweight

Find out more at  
[www.promed-cog.com/PROMED-EX/](http://www.promed-cog.com/PROMED-EX/)

PROMED-EX will recruit 105 participants, with 49 already recruited by September 2022!

Researchers have attended community events, engaged with healthcare professionals and gained support from influential community figures and organisations. Newspaper articles, digital marketing campaigns, Food Matters TV, and widely distributed promotional materials have generated successful recruitment.

Read the news articles here: [Belfast Live](#) [Sunday Life](#) [Irish News](#)



## NEW TEAM MEMBER

Dr Dominic Farsi has joined the research team as trial manager on the PROMED-EX intervention, covering Dr Roisin O'Neill for the duration of her maternity leave.

## STAKEHOLDERS



PROMED-COG is partnered with 4 esteemed stakeholders:



We also have a network of collaborators who have been invaluable in progressing the project including:

- Donard GP Surgery
- Castlereagh GP Surgery
- Age Friendly Partnerships
- FoodStock West Belfast Food Bank
- Engage with Age
- The Spectrum Centre
- Health & Wellbeing Development Team (Belfast Health & Social Care Trust)
- Women's Institute
- ABC Senior's Network
- Join Dementia Research



## PATIENT & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The PROMED Patient and Public Involvement Group (PPI) was established by PhD student Rachel Reid-McCann and consists of 8 older adults from the local area in Northern Ireland. The group met virtually in 2021, and in-person in 2022. The group is composed of members of the public meeting some of the PROMED-EX criteria and help shape the research intervention.



PhD student Rachel Reid-McCann and members of the PPI group attending an informational meeting in 2022.

## NEXT STEPS FOR THE PROJECT

### An exciting year ahead for PROMED-COG...



Further analysis and results from all International Partners



Publications of work in journals



Recruitment of more participants for the PROMED-EX  
intervention

Check our website for regular news updates,  
publications, information, newsletter sign-up and  
how to contact us

[www.promed-cog.com](http://www.promed-cog.com)

Please contact the Project Administrator, Clare Jess  
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