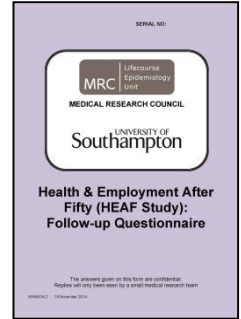
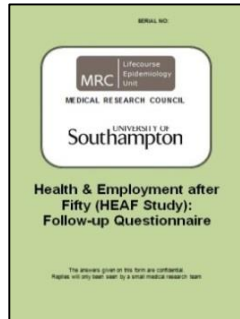
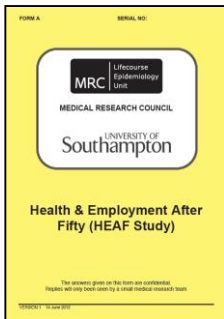
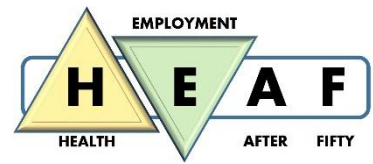


Health and Employment After Fifty (the HEAF study)



Dear participant

The HEAF study has now begun its **FIFTH** year! We have included some new questions in this year's questionnaire which is enclosed. We have also developed a study logo to reflect the importance of this research. Once again, we want to thank you, our participants, for completing the questionnaires and making the HEAF study such a success. Without you, it just would not be possible for this vital research to take place.

A brief reminder about the HEAF study...

The HEAF study is a research investigation of a group of more than 8000 people aged over 50 years who live in England.

People in Britain are living for longer, and more older people are staying in work past the traditional retirement age. The HEAF study aims to find out whether working to older ages is good or bad for health and in what ways, and also how often health affects people's ability to work in different types of job at older ages. We will use our findings to inform government departments, like the Department for Work and Pensions, and the Department of Health, and to inform employers about what can and cannot be expected from older workers.

Back in 2013, patients from 24 general practices across England agreed to take part in the HEAF study and more than 80% of participants are still taking part.

We still need your help!

We wish to emphasise that it **does not** matter whether you are: **employed/self-employed/unemployed/retired/volunteering/caring for someone** - we still want **you** to be part of the HEAF study!

Progress in 2016....more results have been published!

- More women (54%) than men (46%) are taking part in the HEAF study
- Nearly a quarter of people have fully retired and 1 in 12 people receive an ill-health pension, mainly because of a musculoskeletal or a mental health problem
- Body weight is closely linked with joint and muscle pain, especially leg pain, and the two together increase the risk of job loss
- Frailty is a condition that tends to be associated with the elderly, but we have discovered that physical frailty is fairly common in mid-life and can have a major impact on a person's ability to work
- Almost one fifth of people do not get a good night's sleep and insomnia is linked with poor health and worries about work (for example, job insecurity or difficult colleagues)

Further information about the HEAF research study can be found online at:
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/s12889-015-2396-8.pdf>

Future plans for HEAF....there is still much to do!

We have gathered lots of information from all the questionnaires that you have completed. Over the next year we plan to focus on a number of subjects including:

- The importance of diet, and the impact of being overweight or obese on health and work at older ages
- How job satisfaction and conditions in the workplace influence people's decisions about whether to keep working or whether to retire
- Psychological health and well-being in older people
- Financial worries at older ages
- Job loss at older ages because of health problems

You can find out more about our latest findings at:
<http://www.mrc.soton.ac.uk/cmhw/southampton-hub/research-projects-led-by-the-southampton-hub/the-heaf-study/>

and also discover more about all of our research at:
www.mrc.soton.ac.uk/cmhw

Moving house? Please let us know!

If you are changing address, please get in touch and let us know your new contact details:-

telephone: 023 80777624

email: chl@mrc.soton.ac.uk

We really hope you are able to continue to help us. We value your tremendous support for the HEAF study and it is only with your help that we are able to carry out this important work. We will be back in touch in a year's time.

Thank you!