



Public engagement activity: What is ageing?

Aim

To introduce the concept of healthy ageing and start conversations about ageing research.

Materials

Set of cards (printed from the below) and space at a table. You could also print out our infographics or bring along an object related to your research.

Instructions

- 1 Before starting, write some statements related to your own research on the blank cards.
- 2 Use the information in the facilitator notes to familiarise yourself with any subject areas outside of your expertise.
- 3 Give participants a few statement cards and ask them to read through the cards and if there is any vocabulary they are not familiar with. Place the 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Not sure' cards across the table.
- 4 Ask participants to sort the various statement cards onto a scale of 'agree' to 'disagree'.
- 5 Try not to lead participants' answers, stress that the activity is not about 'right' answers. Be aware of your audience and their individual experiences and perspectives e.g. based on their age, cultural background etc.

(continued overleaf)



Instructions (continued)

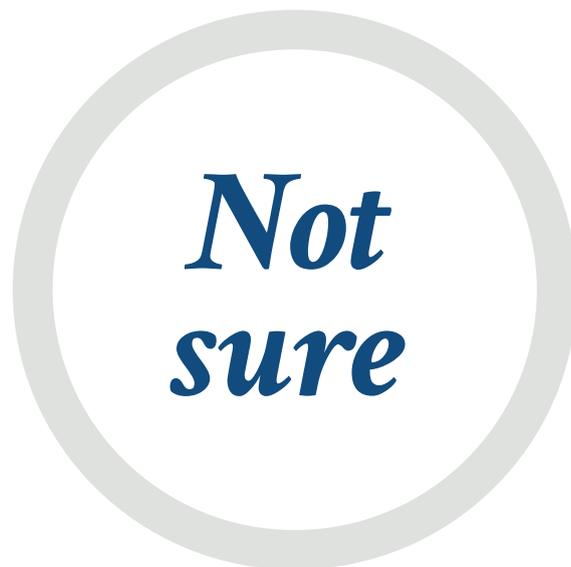
- 6 Once they have finished placing the cards, invite participants to share more conversationally their general opinions and ideas about ageing.

Discuss their responses, challenging misconceptions and opening conversation about:

- The future of ageing and healthy ageing research
- Challenging any ageing myths
- What is inevitable in relation to ageing and what is more likely a product of lifestyle factors
- Discuss what we can consider a 'natural' part of the ageing process, perhaps drawing on examples of things that were considered normal in the past but are no longer considered inevitable
- Discuss behaviours and environmental factors that are known to increase or decrease chances of 'healthy ageing', whilst stressing that these are not guarantees but statistical probabilities



Scale cards





Print these pages and cut out the individual cards



People worldwide are living longer than in the past, but their healthy years are more or less the same.



Most people in the world can expect to live into their 60s and beyond.



By 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over.



Depression and loneliness are common in older adults.



Older people cannot learn new things.



Cognitive decline is a normal part of ageing.





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Ageing is the result of molecular and cellular damage over time.



Ageing results in a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity and a growing risk of disease.



Risk of disease is directly correlated with age.



As people age, they need less sleep.



Mild forgetfulness is a normal sign of ageing.



Older adults should avoid exercise so they don't get injured.

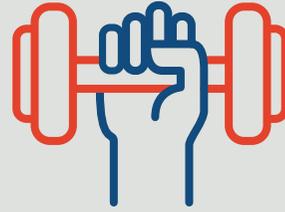




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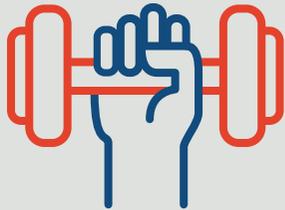
An inevitable part
of getting older is
bad health.



It is not possible
to have a good
level of fitness
past 60 years old.



It's better to
die quickly.



Inactivity speeds
up the ageing
process.



If you did not exercise
regularly before you
reached 60 there is
no point in starting.



A healthy diet
can help
prevent
age-related
diseases.





Print these pages and cut out the individual cards



A healthy diet increases your chances of 'healthy ageing'.



A healthy lifestyle (diet & exercise) can help maintain good brain function.



Ageing can be prevented.



Your genes determine your health.



Your lifestyle (e.g. diet, sleep & exercise) play a bigger role in your overall health and longevity than your genes.

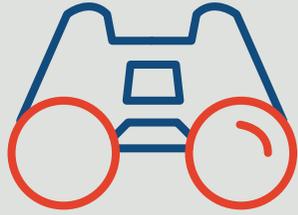


Taking vitamins helps you age more healthily.





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In the future,
people will live
even longer.



In the future, people
will have a longer
'healthspan' (years
in good health).



Older people
have a weaker
immune system.



Even though people
with two or more
illnesses urgently need
new treatments, they
aren't usually included
in clinical trials.



Some ageing drug
treatments in
development aim to
reactivate biological
processes that have
stopped working properly
in older age.



How well you are
ageing is poorly
measured by age
alone.





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In the UK, men spend on average over 16 years in poor health. For women, this rises to 19 years.



There is nothing you can do to influence whether you will get Alzheimer's disease.



Lifespan and healthspan (years in good health) vary from place to place and between men and women.

