Author’s response to reviews

Title: The Australian Research Council Longevity Intervention (ARCLI) study protocol (ANZCTR12611000487910) Addendum: Neuroimaging and Gut Microbiota Protocol

Authors:

Tamara Simpson (tsimpson@swin.edu.au)
Saurenne Deleuil (Sdeleuil@swin.edu.au)
Nicole Echaverria (necheverria@swin.edu.au)
Mrudhula Komanduri (mkomanduri@swin.edu.au)
Helen Macpherson (helen.macpherson@deakin.edu.au)
Chao Suo (chao.suo@monash.edu)
Shakuntla Gondalia (sgondalia@swin.edu.au)
Masoumeh Fard (tina.tangestani@gmail.com)
Andrew Pipingas (apipingas@swin.edu.au)
Andrew Scholey (ascholey@swin.edu.au)
Con Stough (cstough@gmail.com)

Version: 1 Date: 12 Dec 2018

Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1: Abstract:

- Provide overall sample size. Are an additional 80 participants being enrolled? Please clarify.

• 80 eligible participants from the overall study pool of ~400 will be recruited into the neuroimaging study.

• This has now been updated in the abstract.
- Are the 100 participants who are providing fecal samples equally distributed across all 4 treatment arms?

  • The number of participants providing faecal samples has been updated in the Abstract and in text from 100 to ~300.
  
  • Yes, equal distribution across the groups is assumed, 75 per group notwithstanding any withdrawals, forgetfulness or other reasons associated with not obtaining a stool sample for a visit. This number has now been indicated in text.

Design/Methodology: How many participants are in each arm of the study? Will participants be enrolled into neuroimaging sub-study prior to randomization? Please include a bit more about the order/timing.

  • The numbers have been updated in text to reflect the number of participants anticipated for each arm of the study.
  
  • Yes, all participants are enrolled into the study prior to randomization, this has been elaborated on in text.

Participants: Abstract states that 80 participants will be including neuroimaging sub-study and text states 70. Please clarify.

  • Now amended in text to 80 participants.

Discussion: Are there any anticipated pitfalls or limitations?

  • Yes, we have now included a paragraph in the discussion outlining these.

A diagram/timeline for the gastrointestinal microflora sub-study would also be useful.

  • Yes, we have now included a second figure to outline the gut microflora sub-study.

Reviewer #2: "please get author to check if description of additional supplement is correct. In addition, the referencing is inconsistent and needs to be amended to the journal requirements."

  • The description of the supplement has been amended in the Abstract.
  
  • We have double checked the Endnote style used and have updated it to BioMed Central. The abbreviated