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NIMHANS & University of Southern California to initiate 'Global Ageing and Mental Health' research

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This 5-year research on global brain ageing is funded by NIA/NIHâ??s grant of Rs 21 crore



The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru, and the University of Southern California (USC), US have collaborated for the India ENIGMA Initiative for Global Ageing and Mental Health research. This 5-year project aims at bridging the knowledge gap around the various factors influencing the acceleration in brain ageing.

Funded by a competitive research grant of Rs 21 crore from the National Institute on Ageing (NIA)/National Institutes of Health (NIH), US, the project has been approved by the Health Ministry of the Government of India and the NIMHANS Institutional Ethics Committee.

The Enhancing NeuroImaging Genetics through Meta-Analysis (ENIGMA) consortium, headed by Dr Paul M. Thompson, Director, Imaging Genetics Centre (IGC), USC, has brought together researchers who study major brain diseases, from around 40 countries.

Eminent researchers from NIMHANS, Dr John. P. John, Professor of Psychiatry and Faculty in charge – Multimodal Brain Image Analysis Laboratory (MBIAL), Dr G. Venkatasubramanian, Professor of Psychiatry and Faculty-in-charge, Translational Psychiatry Laboratory (TransPsych Lab), Dr P.T. Sivakumar, Professor of Psychiatry and Head, Geriatric Psychiatry Unit will be a part of this initiative. They will aim to study the factors contributing to brain ageing in the Indian population that can lead to an increased risk for Alzheimer’s dementia and other related disorders.

To be conducted at NIMHANS, Bengaluru, the study will involve 400 participants (including healthy older adults and persons with memory impairment) who can volunteer to participate. This study includes comprehensive assessment of risk and protective factors through clinical interview, memory and cognitive tests, blood investigations and brain imaging (MRI scan). The researchers will follow up with the participants over two years to understand the contribution of these factors to the risk of developing dementia.