

Media statement

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Sunshine Coast cardiac trial provides early detection of heart disease

Sunshine Coast volunteers are needed for a cutting-edge trial which will reveal whether they have very early signs of heart disease.

The University of Queensland-led study, conducted at Sunshine Coast University Hospital and Ipswich Hospital, is using advanced technology to determine participants' risk of developing heart disease and to compare two approaches to managing their care.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) Cardiologist Professor Tony Stanton said volunteers underwent a CT scan to obtain their coronary calcium score.

“Depending on their result, they may also then undergo a CT coronary angiogram.”

Prof Stanton said the tests, provided free-of-charge to trial participants, would normally cost more than \$500 and were not currently covered by Medicare.

“This is a great incentive for people to get involved in the trial, have themselves checked for early indications of heart disease and make a contribution to medical research.

“Early detection and management play a critical role in preserving and maintaining heart health.”

Men and women aged between 40 and 70 with no diagnosed heart disease and who are not already on cholesterol lowering medication are able to volunteer for the study.

“We need people for the trial who have a close relative who was diagnosed with coronary artery disease, angina or heart attack at a young age (before 60),” Professor Stanton said.

The calcium scoring CT scan looks for specks of calcium in the walls of the coronary arteries, which is an early sign of heart disease.

“If signs of heart disease are detected, further scans are conducted and management plans are created or intervention is provided to assist the participant.”

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The trial is part of an Australia-wide study known as CAUGHT-CAD – or Coronary Artery calcium score: Use to Guide management of Hereditary Coronary Artery Disease.

The study is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service.

To participate or for more information on the trial contact Research Nurse Sarah McLennan on: 3176 7500 or caught@uq.edu.au - or visit <https://medicine.uq.edu.au/caught-cad>

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