

# Understanding the trajectory of frailty across the life course



Frailty refers to a person's mental and physical ability to bounce back and recover from illness or injury. Frailty is widely used to guide the clinical care of older people. However, its relevance in people aged under 65 is not clear. The aim of this study is to simplify the process by which clinicians identify the risk of future poor outcomes, such as changes in physical health or quality of life to direct earlier care and treatment.

## What are we doing?

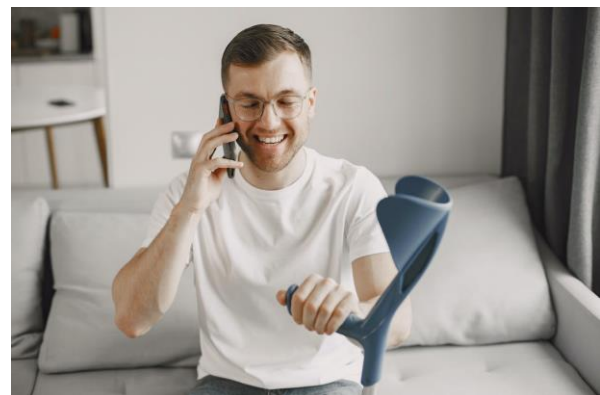
We have used national studies which have followed people since birth (birth cohorts), to make a 'frailty index'. This is a way of measuring the level of frailty and it can be applied to different groups of people over time. The birth cohorts allow us to look at factors across people's lives (e.g. socioeconomic position), which may influence frailty at any age.

At the same time, we are testing a Hospital Frailty Risk Score (HFRS), created automatically from NHS electronic records for people admitted to hospital in England. We are examining if this risk score is related to hospital outcomes such as long stays and survival.

To inform and support this work, we are engaging with members of the public and professional stakeholders with an interest in frailty in younger ages to ensure our research is capturing what's important, and that it will be useful.

## How will it help?

Once we understand the factors associated with frailty in younger adults, we can think about policies or interventions that could be applied during a person's life to slow or prevent the development of frailty.



**Representative: Professor Simon Conroy**