

# Perioperative Enhancement of Cognitive Trajectory (The PROTECT trial)

ACTRN12619001778178

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Status	RECRUITING
Sponsor	The University of Melbourne
Enrollment	692 participants

## Plain Language Summary

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After surgery, many older adults experience confusion (called delirium) or a decline in memory and thinking — sometimes lasting months. This is sometimes called postoperative cognitive disorder, and it can have serious long-term consequences including increased dementia risk. This trial is testing whether a specialised care program — combining careful medication management, pain relief strategies, and lifestyle changes targeting risk factors like inactivity and diabetes — can reduce these problems in older surgical patients.

Participants are randomly assigned to either the specialised care program or standard hospital care. Their thinking and memory are tested before surgery and again at three and twelve months afterwards, using a battery of neuropsychological tests. Researchers will also track quality of life, independence, and how many days participants spend outside of hospital.

You may be eligible if you are 65 or older and are scheduled for cardiac or non-cardiac surgery that requires at least one night in hospital, and you live close enough to St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne to attend follow-up appointments. People with prior significant brain injury, hearing or vision problems that would interfere with testing, or who lack capacity to consent independently are not eligible.

## Key Eligibility Criteria

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### Inclusion (3)

- Patients aged 65 years or older, scheduled for cardiac or non-cardiac surgery, requiring at minimum, one night hospital stay
- Reside within a reasonable proximity to St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne to facilitate neuropsychology follow up and participation with intervention strategies.
- Capacity to provide written informed consent

### Exclusion (4)

- Prior neurological injury or insult (e.g., major traumatic brain injury)
- Contraindication to neuropsychological testing such as language, visual or hearing impairment
- Associated medical problems that may lead to significant complications and subsequent loss to follow or inability to engage with prehabilitation activities.
- Patients unable to consent independently to their surgery on account of cognitive impairment

## Locations (1 total)

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St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Ltd - Fitzroy, VIC, Australia

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<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12619001778178>

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