

MIDDEL Project Newsletter No. 3

Dear MIDDEL colleagues,

Here is an informal update on the MIDDEL-project, and our newsletter No. 3: The photo below sums it all up!

A Christmas newsletter in November? Has the world gone awry? No, but sometimes you just can't wait until December...

We have many good news to sum up this year, and if you follow our page on [Facebook](#) you will have seen some glimpses of the activities in each of our countries along the way. We have brought not only assessment forms (oh yes, lots of those) but also drums, violins, old classics and new hits, some dance moves, and even MIDDEL-themed cake into the participating care homes. They have opened their doors to us and allowed us to proceed with our project in spite of the ongoing challenges faced by care home staff and residents during this time. And because of these challenges, there is particular need for a project like this. Social isolation is a measure against—but also a serious consequence of—COVID-19, and we know that isolation and stimulus deprivation are the opposite of what is therapeutically recommended for our target group. Let us celebrate the progress of MIDDEL by listing some of the milestones that have been reached this year:

Completion of the Australian part of the project

Despite continued lockdowns in Melbourne and heavy restrictions on access to care homes, the team in Australia managed to continue with completing the data collection for their 20 care home units (CHUs). The data from this part of the project have been analysed, and the results were written up and submitted for publication in October. The findings have important policy implications, and we look much forward to share the experiences from this part of the trial in the new year!

First units randomized and interventions commenced in Europe

In April this year, the first CHUs in Europe were assessed, randomised, and started interventions. The first units were in Norway, followed by the Netherlands, Turkey, and Germany. On this date we have 20 randomised units in Europe, making up a total of 40 units in MIDDEL so far, with 566 residents and 307 staff participants. There is also a lot going on “behind the scenes” in addition to the numbers randomised, with ongoing enrolment and assessments among new participants in the UK for example, where it has been decided that Cambridge will contribute with four units alongside those from Nottingham.

Start of biomarker substudy

The biomarker substudy is a separate work package in MIDDEL, where we are collecting hair and saliva samples (in addition to subjective measures of stress) to investigate short- and long-term effects of music interventions on stress. This substudy is led by our Dutch team, who kicked off with the first sample collection in September! Germany and Norway will follow suit in the year to come, and the samples will subsequently be analysed by our research partners at the University of Vienna.

Start of process evaluation

The process evaluation of MIDDEL will provide valuable insight into implementation of the interventions, barriers and facilitators, and different stakeholders' experiences related to relevance, feasibility, and satisfaction. This part of the study was also commenced this year after careful planning led by the Dutch team, and includes care home managers, intervention providers, care staff, and in some cases also informal care givers, in the various European countries.

Meetings and events

We've had three EU partner (video) meetings this year, where the main items on the agenda have concerned recruitment progress/plans and updates from each country. The Data Safety and Monitoring Committee (DSMC) has also met with the Norwegian team twice this year, to discuss interim reports of

the currently available data. And the MIDDEL project has been presented at 5 international conferences, including workshops, posters and oral presentations!

We have also had greeted several new members of the local teams across our countries, who have been added to the respective pages at our project website <https://middel-project.eu>. Welcome to MIDDEL. 😊

There will be some temporary changes in contact persons in the Norwegian core team in the upcoming months, as I will be on maternity leave. While my role as PI will remain the same, my wonderful colleagues will step in and share tasks during my absence. Christian Gold and Monika Geretsegger (cc) can be contacted for any inquiries related to the international part of MIDDEL, and Jo Wake (cc) will be coordinating the Norwegian part of the project.

Happy Holidays!

Best wishes,
Vigdis, on behalf of the Norwegian team

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The MIDD_{EL} Christmas newsletter

2021 YEAR -IN- REVIEW



Currently

40 CHUs

with a total of **566** residents

Misc. data:

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS 5

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS 163

DAYS IN HOME OFFICE ...?

PANDEMICS SURVIVED 1

2021 highlights / favorite moments

- Australia completed follow-up
- First units randomised in Europe
- Start of biomarker substudy & process evaluation
- Interventions ongoing!

Merry Christmas Frohe Weihnachten Mutlu Noeller Zalig Kerstfeest God jul!

