

Listening to Early Career Researchers

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Introduction

It is only through the undertaking of vital dementia research that we can understand Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and neurodegenerative diseases - research to understand what is happening in the brain and how to prevent, better diagnose, treat, and care for people living with these diseases.

Behind every discovery are researchers, with the majority falling into the category of being at the early career stage. Early Career Researchers (ECRs) significantly contribute to the field, but from within, there are concerns about how supported individuals feel to thrive and remain within research. There are also questions around what actions research institutions, funders and policy makers are taking to address research careers issues.

To investigate researchers' experiences of their workplaces, fields, careers and support, University College London and The Alzheimer's Association International Society to Advance Alzheimer's Research and Treatment (ISTAART) Professional Interest Area to Elevate Early Career Researchers (PEERS) surveyed ECRs working in the field of dementia or those who had recently left the field.

This report provides the results of the survey conducted between the 1st of September to 31st October 2021.

Further details and the full data can be freely accessed at:

www.dementiaresearcher.nihr.ac.uk/survey

Please Note - the survey involved branching logic, as a result not every respondent was asked every question. Full details on responses to each question are included in the appendix.

Executive Summary

The findings of this survey will not come as a surprise to anyone working within the dementia research space. It paints a picture of a workforce who enjoy their jobs, are motivated, driven and care about the work that they do and the people that will benefit from their discoveries. However, it also highlights the challenges they face personally, professionally, and culturally within the world of academia.

The uncertainty that comes with short-term contracts, comes through the survey as a clear concern to early career researchers. This is not an issue which is unique to people working in dementia research, however at a time when we need to encourage and retain people, it is a real concern. This position worsens when working in a part of the world that depends heavily on government funding to support dementia research. Over 85% of respondents believe that the nature of short-term funding was a major barrier to the advancements and discovery in dementia research, and that should come as no surprise when 48% of respondents had 2 years or less remaining on their current contract. Respondents highlight that beyond the personal uncertainty, much research time is taken writing grants, job hunting and trying to work out 'what next'.

Through the survey we also discovered that over 50% of respondents were considering leaving research. Losing researchers at a time when more are needed would be a devastating blow. However, if action is taken, to improve working conditions, particularly at the postdoctoral stage, the passion and enthusiasm for the topic is there in the community with over 50% of respondents stating that it is important for them to work in the field, and they feel this is an important topic with many opportunities.

Further analysis is needed to better understand the survey results, particularly around the questions asked about prejudice and experiences.

The numbers of respondents reporting negative experiences and discrimination is better than some other surveys have reported, but still higher than one would hope and there is significant variability across continents.

With a better understanding of the concerns and needs of the community we can now explore ways to address concerns and deliver the support needed.

Message from the PEERS Executive Committee

Delivering this survey, is a major milestone for PEERS, a process started in late 2020. The findings will steer our work and inform the decisions we make on how to offer support. It also gives us insights on where to lobby for change and improvements, working with funding bodies, policy makers and academic and health institutions. However, publishing these results, and making them freely available for further analysis, is just the first step.

We have a passionate community of dedicated ECRs, but they need more support if we are to rapidly deliver discoveries and much needed improvements in prevention, care, diagnosis, treatment, and support for people living with dementia.

The results of the survey have reassured us that we have an enthusiastic, dedicated and thriving ECR community. However, there are also many areas for concern and areas which can be improved. PEERS will continue to undertake further analysis on the results of this survey, publish the findings and act on the next steps highlighted at the end of this report.

Adam Smith, Chairperson

Who took the survey?

- 584 people took the survey.
- 462 of the respondents are currently active in research

The survey was open from 1st September 2021 to 31st October 2021 and completed by a range of researchers from undergraduate through to faculty stages and across all dementia research fields. For the purposes of the survey, we define an ECR as anyone pre-tenure.

What is your current position / title / training level?

PhD / Graduate Student	34.62%
Postdoctoral Researcher / Research Fellow	29.67%
Assistant Professor	12.45%
Other	11.72%
Undergraduate Student	6.41%
Associate Professor	3.48%
Full Professor	1.65%

Which of the following fields most align with your work?

Biomarkers	30.22%
Basic Science and Pathogenesis	29.12%
Data analysis	24.36%
Dementia Care	21.61%
Neuropsychology	21.61%
Clinical	21.06%
Public Health	19.78%
Patient and Public Involvement	10.44%
Social Care	10.26%
Technology	9.89%
Communities / environment	9.16%
Drug discovery / development	7.88%
Other	7.88%
Arts and Dementia	5.68%
Delivery of drug trials	1.10%

What is your age?

Under 18	0.23%
18-24	9.73%
25-34	48.87%
35-44	30.09%
45-54	7.01%
55-64	2.71%
65+	1.13%

- Researchers from 42 countries responded to the survey
- 56 nationalities were represented
- How people defined their gender - 66% of survey respondents were Women, 32% Men, 1% Genderqueer, non-binary, self-described, 1% preferred not to answer.

Do you receive any of the following work / study related benefits?

	Not sure	No	Yes
Paid vacation	3.52%	26.10%	70.38%
Paid sick leave	6.74%	26.39%	66.86%
Paid parental leave	13.06%	39.47%	47.48%
Health insurance	3.53%	51.76%	44.71%
Time off to care for someone	25.82%	36.80%	37.39%
Bereavement leave	28.49%	34.12%	37.39%
Access to a gym / reduced cost membership	7.99%	55.03%	36.98%
Travel benefits for commuting	7.72%	70.33%	21.96%
Workers union	13.53%	64.71%	21.76%
Relocation allowance	14.93%	70.45%	14.63%
Food pantry	6.49%	83.19%	10.32%
Accommodation / housing	3.85%	89.64%	6.51%

- Employee benefits vary from country to country, full data is available for further analysis. However, most respondents (around 2/3) do receive paid vacation / holidays and sick leave. Overall, the responses highlight how varied benefits are from institution to institution and by country.

Are you treated or perceived to be a racial minority or person of color where you currently live?

No	79.41%
Yes	17.87%
Prefer not to answer	2.71%

Do you consider yourself to hold an identity that is underrepresented?

	Prefer not to answer	Not sure	No	Yes
Among people who hold your preferred future position	2.26%	13.35%	48.19%	36.20%
At your own institution	2.49%	9.05%	58.60%	29.86%
Amongst your peers	2.26%	5.66%	63.12%	28.96%

- 29% of respondents considered themselves to hold an identity that is underrepresented at their institution and amongst peers, increasing to 36% when considering those who hold the position they hope to reach in the future.

- 26.7% of respondents had dependants under the age of 18, and 24.6% identified themselves as being a primary care giver. Additionally, 41.6% were the main or sole income providers in their household, and 7.4% identified as having a disability or learning difficulty.

What is your sexual orientation?

Straight or Heterosexual	78.28%
Bisexual	8.82%
Gay or Lesbian	6.33%
Prefer not to answer	4.75%
Other sexual orientation (Write in sexual orientation)	1.36%
Questioning	0.45%

Would you consider yourself to be a 'first generation' student? (By this we mean the first generation to go to university)

No	60.32%
Yes	38.10%
Prefer not to answer	1.59%

What do you think are the most significant challenges in moving internationally for work / study?

Funding and costs of moving	73.62%
Being separated from family	59.23%
Immigration / Eligibility to work abroad	42.21%
Lack of support	41.01%
Language	37.89%
Fear moving to a new country	17.75%
Other	7.43%

Which of the following social media platforms do you use for research / work / study related purposes?

Twitter	67.42%
LinkedIn	53.62%
Facebook	21.27%
Instagram	16.06%
None of the options defined	11.76%
Other	8.14%
TikTok	1.58%
Prefer not to answer	0.23%
Snap Chat	0.23%

- We asked respondents about the education level of their parents - 46% had at least one with a college or higher degree, and 20% had one with a doctorate. 6.5% didn't finish school, and 13% finished school but didn't go to University.
- The proportion of respondents who moved country for their work / studies was 47%.
- The proportion of respondents who are dissatisfied / very dissatisfied with research funding in their home country was 54%.

What do you use social media for?

To keep up to date with my research field	67.27%
To communicate my science	55.45%
Looking for jobs / funding	47.73%
I use it as a support network	43.64%
Career support	27.73%
It has helped me recruit to my study	13.41%
I don't use it	9.32%
Other	5.45%
Prefer not to answer	0.23%

- 27.4% of respondents have been offered communications training from their employer / institution, 60.2% have not and 12.2% responded maybe / not sure / can't remember.

What inspired you to work in the field of dementia research?

	Not important at all	Low importance	Neutral	Important	Very important	N/A
Interest in research in general (independent of dementia)	3.08%	3.64%	7.84%	36.13%	47.34%	1.96%
Personal / Professional curiosity	4.75%	3.35%	7.26%	34.64%	46.65%	3.35%
A professor / lecture at university	14.08%	10.14%	9.30%	31.27%	27.89%	7.32%
Personal experience of dementia	17.18%	11.83%	12.96%	19.72%	23.66%	14.65%
Natural progression from a previous field of research	15.45%	5.90%	12.64%	30.06%	23.31%	12.64%
It just happened / chance	14.73%	15.30%	17.28%	26.91%	11.90%	13.88%
Appeared to be a field with lots of funding / opportunities	24.79%	15.95%	19.66%	20.23%	10.54%	8.83%
Media/ news about the topic of dementia	31.43%	16.86%	18.86%	14.86%	5.43%	12.57%
School teacher	40.52%	10.34%	12.64%	10.92%	5.17%	20.40%

- We also asked respondents to select which factor was the single most important. Personal curiosity scored highest with 20.7%, next was general interest in research with 19.5% and next was personal experience of dementia with 17.5%. News and media were lowest with less than 1%.

What do you think about dementia research as a career?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The field of dementia research is competitive.	0.28%	2.54%	15.77%	47.89%	33.52%
I worry about my future career in dementia research.	3.40%	12.46%	19.83%	33.99%	30.31%
It is personally important for me to work in dementia research.	1.98%	4.82%	22.95%	41.64%	28.61%
A career in dementia research is rewarding and enjoyable	0.28%	2.27%	22.38%	50.99%	24.08%
I feel pressured to gain experience at another institute, ideally abroad.	19.32%	20.17%	18.75%	21.59%	20.17%
I can imagine working in a different research field.	3.95%	11.58%	16.95%	48.31%	19.21%
Dementia research is an attractive field for an early career researcher.	2.54%	7.34%	25.99%	44.92%	19.21%
A career in dementia research is stressful.	3.39%	10.73%	27.97%	41.53%	16.38%
The field of dementia research is cooperative.	1.13%	9.92%	30.31%	44.76%	13.88%
A career in dementia research is well paid.	17.28%	28.05%	40.79%	12.18%	1.70%

- 95% of respondents agree or strongly agree that funding and job opportunities are the biggest barrier to early career researchers, and 87% agree or strongly agree that job security is a significant issue.
- We asked how many organisations respondents worked for / had a contract with. 49.7% were with one, 16.7% with two, 3.4% with three, and 3.2% with four or more.

In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges for early career researchers to stay in academic dementia research?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Funding / job opportunities	0.00%	1.45%	3.20%	33.43%	61.92%
Job security	0.29%	4.40%	8.80%	26.98%	59.53%
Financial security	1.17%	2.64%	10.85%	36.36%	48.97%
Day-to-day work-life balance	1.17%	6.71%	22.45%	37.90%	31.78%
Balancing long-term personal and professional goals	0.87%	4.07%	18.31%	45.64%	31.10%
Competitiveness	0.88%	3.23%	23.46%	44.57%	27.86%
Need to gain experience internationally/abroad	10.56%	19.65%	33.43%	21.11%	15.25%
Not sure	17.69%	3.08%	70.77%	2.31%	6.15%

How is your current position funded?

Government agency	29.83%
University	29.59%
Self-funded	10.26%
Other	8.83%
Dementia charity	8.11%
Foundation	6.21%
Non-dementia charity	2.86%
Private company / commercial	2.63%
Not currently working / studying	1.67%

How would you categorise your primary place of work / study?

Academia (University or College)	78.13%
Hospital or clinic	12.76%
Other (please specify)	3.39%
Government	2.86%
Non-Profit organisation	2.34%
Industry	0.26%
Residential care facility	0.26%

How long is your current contract?

Less than a year	8.89%
1 year	15.90%
2 years	14.56%
3 years	21.29%
4 years	12.94%
5 years	9.16%
Permanent position	15.90%
Not currently working / studying	1.35%

How much time do you have left on your current contract?

< 6 months	16.67%
6-12 months	24.44%
1-3 years	35.00%
3-5 years	6.39%
5+ years	1.67%
Permanent position	15.83%

How many job / position applications did you send to get the position you currently hold?

Only this one	41.49%
2-5 applications	34.31%
6-10 applications	11.70%
10-20 applications	5.32%
20+ applications	7.18%

How do you feel about the following statement "The short-term nature of research contracts and funding is a barrier to making advancements and discoveries in dementia research"

Strongly agree	54.81%
Agree	32.09%
Neither agree nor disagree	10.43%
Disagree	2.67%
Strongly disagree	0.00%

How happy are you in your current role?

Unhappy	3.75%
Slightly unhappy	8.31%
Neither happy or unhappy	10.72%
Slightly happy	28.15%
Happy	49.06%

- We asked respondents if they were thinking of leaving dementia research; 375 people replied, 209 skipped - 32% replied Maybe, 19.7% replied Yes, 48.2% responded No.

What do you believe to be the most significant barriers to career progression?

Funding availability	74.20%
Job availability & security	60.11%
Work-life balance	54.26%
Pressure to generate novel research	37.23%
Availability and accessibility of training opportunities	31.65%
My personality	11.44%
My gender	11.17%
Other	11.17%
My ethnicity	6.12%
I don't believe there are any barriers	2.39%
Not sure	0.53%

- 58% of respondents do not think dementia research is sufficiently funded.
- 48% of respondents do not think they have sufficient resources to carry out their research.

How many applications did you make before receiving your current funding / grant?

Not applicable	47.65%
1	11.29%
2-3	18.18%
4-5	12.85%
6-10	6.90%
11-19	1.57%
20+	1.57%

- We asked, 'How many different funders contribute to the costs of your work / salary?' 33% indicated one, however 21% indicated 3 or more, and of those 4% were funded by 5 or more organisations / charities.
- The survey sought the views of people who consider themselves dementia researchers but who are currently between roles / not working. This part of the survey received 68 responses. From those eligible 55% had been looking for a position for under 6 months, 20% for more than six months and less than twelve months, 16% for one to three years and 9% for more than five years. This could include people returning to work after a period of absence, or those who left research and are looking to return. We also asked this group of people if employers offered to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications without you needing to ask. From the responses 2% replied always, 8% replied usually, 17%, replied sometimes, 35% replied rarely, 38% replied never.

For this part of the survey, we also asked "When approaching the end of your contract / funding, were you offered support from your employer / institution to find your next position?" 42% replied that they were and 58% were not.

Are you currently involved in teaching, in a classroom or workplace setting?

Yes, it is included in my job description	31.67%
Yes, it is expected of me but not included in my job description	25.83%
Yes, but outside my main job as something I do privately	12.92%
No	29.58%

Please describe your teaching activities:

Lecturer	58.82%
Lab supervision	31.62%
Course coordinator	29.41%
Tutor	27.94%
Teaching assistant	19.12%
Clinical training	16.18%
New starter inductions	11.03%
Other	9.56%

How confident do you feel in your teaching activities?

I would rather not answer	0.00%
Very confident	27.01%
Confident	48.18%
Neutral	17.52%
Insecure	6.57%
Very insecure	0.73%

Have you had any formal institutional support or training to prepare you for teaching activities?

Don't remember	0.00%
Yes	47.45%
No	52.55%

Do you feel your organisation / supervisor should have provided more training / support to enable you to deliver your teaching?

Don't know	2.19%
Yes	58.39%
No	39.42%

Experiences

Imposter Syndrome

Have you ever experienced Imposter Syndrome?

Yes	72.13%
No	25.57%
Rather not answer	2.30%

- We asked, 'What have you found to be the most helpful in managing your Imposter Syndrome?' Respondents highlight mindfulness and reframing thoughts as being helpful (59.6%). However, talking with friends and colleagues (82.6%), non-work friends (57.0%) and mentors, advisors, and supervisors (52.2%) emerged as the most helpful. Many respondents found social media perspectives and ideas unhelpful / very unhelpful (29.8%).
- 41% of respondents say their employer / institution was helpful in dealing with imposter syndrome.
- 33% of respondents say their employer / institution was not helpful in dealing with imposter syndrome.
- 53% of respondents say they are managing their impostor syndrome well or very well.
- 18% of respondents say they are managing unwell of very unwell with their imposter syndrome.

How has your Imposter Syndrome affected you?

It has affected my confidence	81.28%
It has affected my motivation	56.17%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	53.19%
It has affected my ambition	48.09%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	46.38%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	38.72%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	34.47%
I have considered leaving my institution	33.62%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	32.34%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	20.00%
I changed my workplace / institution	6.38%
Other	4.68%
I would rather not answer	1.70%

Mental Health

Have you ever experienced a Mental Health Issue?

Yes	57.18%
No	39.66%
Rather not answer	3.16%

Please indicate if any of the following, common Mental Health issues affect you?

Anxiety disorders	63.98%
Depression	51.61%
Loneliness	31.18%
Eating disorders	13.44%
Mood Disorders	12.90%
Panic disorders	11.29%
Other	9.68%
Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	8.06%
I would prefer not to answer	3.76%
Addiction	1.61%

- We asked, 'What have you found to be helpful in dealing with your Mental Health issues?' Respondents highlight exercise being helpful / very helpful (83.5%), and reframing thoughts (67.0%). Talking is also seen as being helpful / very helpful - counsellor (57.9%), non-work friends (70.8%). Perspectives from social media scored lowest (36.9%) find this unhelpful / very unhelpful.
- 37% of respondents say their employer / institution was helpful in dealing with their Mental Health Issue.
- 31% of respondents say their employer / institution was not helpful in dealing with their Mental Health Issue.
- 60% of respondents say they are managing their Mental Health Issue well or very well.
- 16% of respondents say they are managing unwell or very unwell with their Mental Health Issue.

How have your problems with Mental Health affected you?

It has affected my effectiveness at work	73.66%
It has affected my confidence	69.35%
It has affected my motivation	66.13%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	50.54%
It has affected my ambition	48.39%
I have considered leaving my institution	39.78%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	37.10%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	37.10%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	27.96%
I changed my workplace / institution	12.90%
I would rather not answer	1.61%
Other	1.08%

Financial Problems

Have you ever experienced Financial Problems?

No	59.71%
Yes	37.43%
Rather not answer	2.86%

- We asked, 'What have you found to be helpful in dealing with their financial difficulties?' Talking with a family member (60.3%) scored highest and talking to human resources (6.6%) had the lowest response. Only 11.5% spoke with a financial expert. To understand how the issues manifested, 70.4% had difficulty paying monthly bills, 32.0% student loans. Challenges were worsened due to delays in getting paid or reimbursed for expenses (59.0%).
- 7% of respondents say their employer / institution was helpful in dealing with their Financial Problems.
- 33% of respondents say their employer / institution was not helpful in dealing with their Financial Problems.
- 43% of respondents say they are managing their Financial Problems well or very well.
- 26% of respondents say they are managing unwell or very unwell with their Financial Problems.
- 61% of respondents say that have changed their lifestyle to help manage their difficulty.
- 49% of respondents have relied on borrowing money from a family member / friend.
- 33% of respondents rely on a partner to provide financial support fully or partly.
- 23% of respondents have taken out bank loans short / long-term to help manage their financial difficulties.

How have your experience of Financial Problems affected you?

It has affected my motivation	39.67%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	38.84%
I have considered leaving my institution	36.36%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	32.23%
It has affected my confidence	32.23%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	30.58%
It has affected my ambition	27.27%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	25.62%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	18.18%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	14.05%
I changed my workplace / institution	13.22%
I would rather not answer	6.61%
Other	2.48%

Discrimination

As an Early Career Researcher have you ever personally experienced discrimination or prejudice due to: a physical or learning disability (ableism); your age (ageism); your sexual orientation (homophobia); your race (racism); your gender (sexism) or your religion / faith? In the context of academia / your professional life?

	Rather not answer	No	Yes
Sexism	2.58%	60.46%	36.96%
Ageism	2.58%	73.07%	24.36%
Racism	3.15%	85.39%	11.46%
Religion / faith	3.72%	90.26%	6.02%
Homophobia	2.29%	92.55%	5.16%
Ableism	4.02%	91.09%	4.89%

- This question needs to be considered alongside other questions e.g., 11.5% overall have experienced racism, however this increases to 50.6% of those who identify as being an ethnic minority in the place they work, and 64.0% of those who identified as being Gay or Lesbian.
- We asked respondents 'What changes would you like to see to address these forms of prejudice / discrimination? (Ableism, Ageism, Homophobia, Racism, Religion / Faith, Sexism). We received over 140 comments from respondents with their views on what changes would help improve the situation. Common themes to emerge were:

- More training for senior staff and Principal Investigators
- Continued efforts to raise awareness and funding to support campaigns
- Improved and regular policy reviews and enforcement
- More flexibility around contracts and support to enable diversity e.g., funding for people to return to work after starting families
- More people who are likely to understand and have experienced these forms of prejudice in senior positions e.g., gay people / women / people of colour

Ableism

In what way have you experienced ableism?

Being condescended to	41.18%
Mocked for your disability	35.29%
Being asked invasive questions / how I became disabled	29.41%
Choice of meeting / conference venues which are inaccessible	29.41%
Other	23.53%
The assumption that people with disabilities want or need to be 'fixed'	17.65%
Tokenism	17.65%
Employer / Institution failure to incorporate accessibility into building design plans	11.76%
Employer / Institution lack of compliance with disability laws	11.76%
Lack of accommodations to make work environments accessible	11.76%
I would rather not answer	5.88%
Buildings without braille or signs, elevator buttons etc	5.88%
Inaccessible websites that were designed to help researchers	5.88%
People wearing scented products in a scent-free environment	0.00%

- 50% of respondents with a disability including learning difficulties have experiences ableism. Overall, this is 2% of everyone who completed this survey.
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 0% found them extremely helpful, 29.4% very / somewhat helpful and 35.3% found them not so helpful / not helpful at all.

How has your experience of ableism affected you?

It has affected my confidence	50.00%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	43.75%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	43.75%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	37.50%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	31.25%
I have considered leaving my institution	31.25%
It has affected my ambition	25.00%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	18.75%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	18.75%
I would rather not answer	12.50%
It has affected my motivation	12.50%
I changed my workplace / institution	6.25%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	6.25%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	6.25%
Other	6.25%

Ageism

In what way have you experienced ageism?

Overlooked because of your age	63.75%
Supervisor assumed a level of awareness based on age	38.75%
Harassment	16.25%
Refused a grant based on your age	16.25%
Other	16.25%
Refused a promotion based on your age	13.75%
I would rather not answer	8.75%
Lost a job because of your age	1.25%

- 24% of respondents have experienced ageism - with some being discriminated against for being perceived as too old and others for being perceived as too young.
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 1% found them extremely helpful, 26.4% very / somewhat Helpful and 22.2% found them not so helpful / not helpful at all.

How has your experience of ageism affected you?

It has affected my confidence	45.00%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	42.50%
It has affected my ambition	28.75%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	25.00%
It has affected my motivation	25.00%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	22.50%
I have considered leaving my institution	18.75%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	18.75%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences,	18.75%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	12.50%
I would rather not answer	11.25%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	8.75%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	7.50%
Other	7.50%
I changed my workplace / institution	3.75%

Homophobia

How have you experienced homophobia?

Verbal abuse / Inappropriate comments	66.67%
Being unable to be yourself / told to change the way you behave	50.00%
Comments on physical appearance	38.89%
Someone disclosing that you are LGBT to others without your permission	33.33%
Online abuse	16.67%
Overlooked for advancement due to sexual orientation	11.11%
I would rather not answer	5.56%
Physical abuse	5.56%
Other	5.56%

- 64% Of respondents who identify as Gay, or Lesbian (% is 25% if including Bisexual + Other) indicated they experienced homophobia - 5.2% of everyone who completed the survey
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 0% found them extremely helpful, 11.1% very helpful and 22.2% found them not helpful at all.

How has your experience of homophobia affected you?

It has affected my confidence	47.06%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	35.29%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	35.29%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	29.41%
I have considered leaving my institution	23.53%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	23.53%
It has affected my ambition	17.65%
I would rather not answer	11.76%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	11.76%
I changed my workplace / institution	11.76%
It has affected my motivation	11.76%
Other	11.76%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	5.88%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	5.88%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	5.88%

Racism

In what way have you experienced racism?

Microaggressions	62.16%
Double standards	56.76%
Being asked where you are from	54.05%
Being unable to be yourself / told to change the way you behave	45.95%
Verbal abuse / Inappropriate comments	40.54%
Tokenism	32.43%
Overlooked for advancement due to race or ethnicity	27.03%
Institution / employer failure to comply with diversity regulation	21.62%
Other	10.81%
Online abuse	5.41%
I would rather not answer	0.00%
Physical abuse	0.00%

- 82% of respondents who identify as a minority in the place where they work / study have experienced racism - 13.5% of everyone who completed the survey.
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 0% found them extremely helpful, 16.2% very / somewhat helpful and 40.5% found them not so helpful/ not helpful at all.

How has your experience of racism affected you?

It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	54.05%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	37.84%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	35.14%
It has affected my confidence	32.43%
It has affected my motivation	29.73%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	27.03%
I have considered leaving my institution	27.03%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	24.32%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	24.32%
It has affected my ambition	18.92%
I changed my workplace / institution	16.22%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	16.22%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	10.81%
I would rather not answer	5.41%
Other	2.70%

Generally, in what way have you experienced racism in your research career?

Individual / interpersonal	72.97%
Systemic	56.76%
Institutional	43.24%
I would rather not answer	2.70%

Religion and Faith

In what way have you experienced discrimination based on your Faith / Religion?

Being asked invasive questions about my religion or beliefs	50.00%
Microaggressions	44.44%
Mocked for your religion / faith	44.44%
Verbal abuse / inappropriate comments	27.78%
I would rather not answer	22.22%
Employer / Institution failure to accommodate working time / holidays that allow me to practice my religion / faith	22.22%
People making assumptions based on appearance	22.22%
Tokenism	16.67%
Unable to be yourself or told to change the way you behave	16.67%
Employer / Institution failure to provide a place for me to practice my religion / faith	11.11%
Institution failure to comply with regulations around religion / faith	11.11%
Overlook for advancement due to your religion / faith	5.56%
Unable to wear particular clothing or display tokens that represent your religion / faith	5.56%
Online abuse	0.00%
Physical abuse	0.00%

- 6% Of respondents indicated that they had experienced discrimination based on their Religion, Faith, or Beliefs.
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 5.3% found them extremely helpful, 10.5% somewhat helpful, 31.6% found them not so helpful / not helpful at all. 52.6% would rather not answer.

How has your experience of religious or faith-based discrimination / prejudice affected you?

It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	41.18%
I would rather not answer	17.65%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	17.65%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	17.65%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	17.65%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	17.65%
It has affected my confidence	17.65%
It has affected my motivation	17.65%
I have considered leaving my institution	11.76%
I changed my workplace / institution	11.76%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	11.76%
It has affected my effectiveness at work	5.88%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	5.88%
It has affected my ambition	5.88%
Other	5.88%

Sexism

In what way have you experienced sexism?

Double standards	70.25%
Microaggressions	52.89%
Misogyny	49.59%
Benevolent sexism e.g., romanticizing women as objects of heterosexual affection & belief that men must protect women.	48.76%
Institutional sexism / gender discrimination	39.67%
Harassment / hostile sexism	20.66%
Objectification	19.01%
Online abuse	6.61%
Other	5.79%
Religious sexism	2.48%

- 41% Of Female / Genderqueer / Nonbinary respondents have experienced Sexism. 20% of all respondents have experiences Sexism.
- We asked how helpful employers / institutions had been if issues were raised. 3.3% found them extremely helpful, 9.3% very / somewhat helpful and 31.3% found them not so helpful / not helpful at all and 55% preferred not to answer.

How has your experience of sexism affected you?

It has affected my effectiveness at work	22.32%
I have considered leaving my institution	15.18%
I have experienced Mental Health problems / depression as a result	14.29%
I changed my workplace or institution	14.29%
Other	7.14%
It has affected the way I write grant applications and journal submissions	9.82%
I would rather not answer	10.71%
It has impacted my career and delayed my progression	28.57%
It has affected the way I interact with my co-workers or supervisors	45.54%
It has affected the way I interact with peers at conferences	18.75%
It has affected the way I socialize with peers outside of work	18.75%
It has affected the way I choose my collaborators	36.61%
It has affected my confidence	38.39%
It has affected my motivation	30.36%
It has affected my ambition	25.89%

Thoughts on discrimination

In the context of academia / your professional life and recognising that you may or may not have been affected. Do you personally feel that the different forms of discrimination / prejudice are getting better or worse?

	Much worse	Worse	Unchanged	Better	Much better	Don't Know / Unable to Answer
Homophobia	1.47%	2.65%	14.45%	42.18%	9.14%	30.09%
Sexism	1.18%	7.35%	32.65%	33.53%	6.47%	18.82%
Racism	2.94%	9.12%	25.88%	30.00%	4.71%	27.35%
Ableism	0.29%	5.90%	28.61%	22.42%	4.42%	38.35%
Religion / faith	1.47%	7.37%	28.91%	19.76%	3.54%	38.94%
Ageism	1.76%	10.59%	30.88%	24.12%	2.35%	30.29%

Your job and workplace

In your research setting, how much time (%) do you spend doing each of the following?

Analysing data / results	20.71%
Conducting basic research	18.47%
Writing and/or publishing research findings	16.61%
Administrative tasks	15.65%
Conducting clinical research	9.58%
Grant writing	8.27%
Teaching	8.00%
Presenting at conferences/seminars	6.42%
Clinical activities	5.13%
Other	4.15%
Job applications	2.51%

Do you feel you spend an appropriate amount of time engaged in each activity you noted on the previous question?

	Too little time	The right amount of time	Too much time	N/A
Administrative tasks	5.97%	39.77%	46.31%	7.95%
Writing grant	34.60%	24.63%	17.30%	23.46%
Teaching	23.81%	35.12%	11.90%	29.17%
Writing and/or publishing research findings	49.71%	39.43%	8.57%	2.29%
Analysing data / results	42.00%	47.71%	7.14%	3.14%
Presenting at conferences/seminars	34.99%	55.39%	4.96%	4.66%
Clinical activities	9.51%	15.95%	4.91%	69.63%
Job applications	16.25%	12.19%	4.06%	67.50%
Other	3.31%	11.40%	3.31%	81.99%
Conducting clinical research	24.32%	25.23%	2.40%	48.05%
Conducting basic research	31.01%	35.07%	2.32%	31.59%

How would you rate your employer / institution on the following issues?

	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good
Focus and interest in Dementia	7.50%	13.13%	18.44%	31.25%	29.69%
Support for independent thinking and innovation	5.64%	10.66%	22.88%	42.32%	18.50%
Provision of research equipment	6.27%	16.30%	26.33%	33.86%	17.24%
Support to networking locally and internationally	8.46%	14.73%	23.20%	38.56%	15.05%
Provision of training	7.14%	12.11%	22.36%	43.48%	14.91%
Cares about its staff / students	6.92%	16.04%	30.82%	33.02%	13.21%
Support for career progression	6.58%	19.12%	25.08%	36.05%	13.17%
Overall support for early career researchers	8.07%	13.98%	19.88%	47.20%	10.87%
Provision of mentoring schemes	10.00%	20.63%	30.00%	29.69%	9.69%
Not sure	2.00%	4.00%	78.00%	8.00%	8.00%
Proactively working to improve research culture e.g., long hours, short contracts	12.85%	31.97%	29.78%	18.50%	6.90%
Provision of individual support / pastoral care	10.63%	22.50%	34.69%	25.62%	6.56%

- We asked if the management style of respondent's managers / supervisors suited them: 60% responded positively, 23% indicated a moderate amount, 17% were unsure or negative.

How would you describe the management style of your current or most recent supervisor / manager?

Not sure	2.67%
Very strict	3.47%
Strict	7.73%
Balanced	37.33%
Relaxed	28.27%
Very relaxed	20.53%

- 20% see their supervisor only once every two months or less often.
- 39% see their supervisor every week.

Collaborations

Considering collaborations, 60.6% of respondents have not received training on how to collaborate with other researchers. Despite this 11.4% feel very prepared to collaborate with non-co-workers, 44% feel prepared, 19.0% neutral & 25.5% unprepared or very unprepared.

We asked how frequent are international collaborations in the research group you are a part of (or spent majority of your training)? 54.7% of respondents responded frequently or very frequently, 30.4% said rarely, 9.8% responded never and 4.9% didn't know. These reply averages did not change when considering research areas, except in clinical research who were less likely to internationally collaborate.

Generally speaking, how connected do you feel with the global research community?

Very disconnected	5.52%
Disconnected	21.17%
Neither connected nor disconnected	32.21%
Connected	33.44%
Very connected	7.67%

Thoughts on conferences

Do you participate in scientific conferences?

Yes	90.09%
No	3.30%
Not yet, but I intend to in the future	6.61%

How many conferences do you attend per year?

0	0.34%
1	12.84%
2-3	69.59%
4-5	12.84%
6+	4.39%

Does your supervisor / manager support you attending conference even when you are not presenting?

Yes	69.28%
No	30.72%

What were the most important training resources for producing posters and presentations?

Conference attendance experience	78.69%
Informally with colleagues	72.16%
Formal training	34.36%
Online resources e.g., YouTube	21.65%
Social media	12.71%
Other	3.44%
None of the above	1.37%

How would the cost of your conference attendance usually funded?

Institutional funding	38.98%
I apply for bursaries / travel grants	37.63%
My supervisor / line manager pays from their budget	35.25%
Personal money	34.24%
Conference travel scholarships	32.88%
Own student grants	20.00%
Varies	12.88%
Other	3.39%
None of the above	0.34%

- 86% of respondents would attend more conferences if they were free / cost not a factor.
- 83% of respondents flag cost of travel as being a major factor in conference attendance.

- 46% Of respondents flag lack time as a major factor in deciding on conference attendance
- 13% Of respondents flag environmental impact as a factor in deciding on conference attendance

How much do you think is reasonable for someone of your career stage, to pay for different types of conference?

In-person conference	\$207.97
Online conference	\$54.86
Webinar	\$19.87

Recognising that there are multiple benefits that come from conference attendance. However, what do you see as the main reason to attend?

Scientific updates	32.07%
Networking with other early career researchers	29.31%
Networking with senior researchers	23.79%
Getting feedback on your work	11.38%
Other	2.07%
Sightseeing and new culinary experiences	1.38%

Have you attended more conferences or fewer conferences since the COVID-19 pandemic began?

Far fewer	17.47%
Fewer	22.60%
About the same	26.37%
More	28.08%
Lots more	5.48%

Of the following options, please select and rank in order of most beneficial elements of conference attendance. 1 being most important and 7 being the least important

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Expanded your network	57.7%	22.8%	10.3%	3.7%	1.8%	1.1%	1.1%
Gained recognition in the field	21.2%	33.9%	21.5%	10.6%	5.5%	2.2%	1.1%
Co-authorship on papers led by collaborators you've met in a conference	8.7%	17.8%	22.5%	16.3%	8.7%	4.7%	4.0%
Opportunity of going abroad for part of your training	5.0%	6.8%	10.8%	10.8%	18.0%	14.4%	16.6%
New collaborative projects led by you	3.9%	9.3%	13.3%	23.3%	13.3%	14.3%	6.5%
Getting to know different countries you wouldn't otherwise have	2.9%	5.1%	9.4%	17.0%	17.0%	21.0%	12.0%
Made friends for life	1.1%	2.2%	6.1%	7.2%	16.9%	17.6%	24.8%

Thoughts on publishing

How pressured do you feel to publish results of your research?

Very pressured	47.06%
Pressured	36.53%
Indifferent	5.88%
A little pressured	8.36%
Not pressured at all	2.17%

- 44% of respondents feel it is getting harder / much harder to publish results. 11% felt it was getting easier / much easier.
- 60% of respondents have not received any formal training on scientific writing from their employer / institution.
- We asked how respondents paid for publication fees. 24.3% replied that they try not to publish in journals which charge, 33.2% replied that their University / Institution pays, 27.2% have included the costs in their grants, 8.2% have used their own money, 6.9% other.

What are the main problems you face in publishing your research?

No time for writing	58.92%
Publication fees	42.36%
Slow collaborators / Supervisor feedback or input	42.04%
Formatting and meeting the submission guidelines	29.94%
Other	13.06%
Communicating with the Editor	9.87%
Resolving authorship Issues	8.60%

How do you feel about the growing number of pre-prints?

Pre-prints promote open access of research	56.92%
Pre-prints allows researchers to communicate and report their research more quickly	55.03%
Pre-prints expedite the communication of important research	43.71%
Pre-prints allow early career researchers to showcase 'manuscripts in preparation' in fellowship applications	41.82%
Pre-prints have the potential to produce more harm than benefit	19.50%
Undecided	18.24%
Pre-prints propagate misinformation	14.47%

- We asked, 'To the best of your knowledge, have any of your publications ever influenced policy, practice or (if clinical / interventional), been implemented?' 61.3% responded no, 19.3% yes, 19.3% none of the above. Qualitative / Care researchers were more likely to respond positively over lab-based researchers.

Where do you get your advice and guidance, in preparing a journal submission?

Supervisor	83.85%
Colleagues	72.67%
Online search / Blogs / Articles	24.22%
University / Organisation Training	17.39%
Social Media	11.80%
Friends	9.01%
Podcasts / YouTube	5.90%
Other	4.35%
None of the above	2.17%

Do you feel the current peer review publication system is effective, and the best way to undertake the task of ensuring rigor and trust in science publishing?

Yes	32.81%
No	46.56%
Don't know	20.63%

Have you undertaken a peer review for a journal?

Yes	69.28%
No	30.72%

If you have undertaken peer review, did you receive any training prior to doing the work?

Yes	19.39%
No	56.80%
Not applicable	23.81%

What changes, if any, would you make to the current peer review system?

In general, the comments reflect a frustration with the current system, particularly in terms of the time taken, the costs of publishing, unprofessional reviews and a lack of support and recognition for those who contribute their time. Suggestions include:

- Do not allow reviewers to see name of authors / blinded
- Pay reviewers / offer discount publication fees
- Insist on training for reviewers
- Accountability for poor reviewer comments / review of the review
- Improve the speed, and reduce time taken to review
- Not to bombard individuals for reviews
- Improve access for ECRs to become involved in peer review

Payment for reviewers and speedier review and publication turn-around were highlighted the most.

Impact of the pandemic

Have your research projects been delayed because of the pandemic?

Yes	77.64%
No	18.32%
Not applicable	3.11%
I would rather not answer	0.93%

Did you have to rethink or change your research project because of the pandemic?

Yes	54.18%
No	41.80%
Not applicable	3.72%
I would rather not answer	0.31%

Did you need to secure an extension or additional funding to enable you to finish your current research?

Yes	37.69%
No	45.48%
Not applicable	14.02%
I would rather not answer	2.80%

Has the pandemic impacted your career progression, due to a lack of jobs / funding?

Yes	41.88%
No	40.31%
Not applicable	15.00%
I would rather not answer	2.81%

Do you feel your institution / employer has effectively supported you during the pandemic?

Yes - they have been really supportive	33.13%
Yes - but they could have been better	42.72%
No	19.81%
Not applicable	3.41%
I would rather not answer	0.93%

Moving countries

- 139 respondents indicated that they had moved countries as part of their studies / research (23%). The most respondents moved from and to the USA and UK (64 of the 139 people who moved countries came to the UK and USA).

Which country did you move from?

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15.56%
United States of America	12.59%
Brazil	9.63%
Netherlands	7.41%
Canada	5.19%
China	4.44%
Germany	4.44%
Ireland	4.44%
France	3.70%
Italy	3.70%
Australia	2.22%
India	2.22%
Mexico	2.22%
Nigeria	2.22%
Portugal	2.22%
Spain	2.22%
Belgium	1.48%
New Zealand	1.48%
Republic of Korea	1.48%
Singapore	1.48%
Costa Rica	0.74%
Denmark	0.74%
Ecuador	0.74%
Finland	0.74%
Ghana	0.74%
Greece	0.74%
Indonesia	0.74%
Jordan	0.74%
Norway	0.74%
Peru	0.74%
Senegal	0.74%
Switzerland	0.74%
Trinidad and Tobago	0.74%

Which country did you move to for work / study most recently?

United States of America	26.62%
United Kingdom	23.02%
Sweden	7.91%
Germany	5.04%
Australia	4.32%
Netherlands	4.32%
China	3.60%
Canada	2.88%
Ireland	2.88%
Belgium	2.16%
Brazil	2.16%
Denmark	1.44%
France	1.44%
Norway	1.44%
Spain	1.44%
Switzerland	1.44%
Chile	0.72%
Cyprus	0.72%
El Salvador	0.72%
Finland	0.72%
Korea, South	0.72%
Lebanon	0.72%
Mexico	0.72%
Morocco	0.72%
New Zealand	0.72%
Portugal	0.72%
Rwanda	0.72%

How many times have you moved to a different country for you work / studies?

1	48.67%
2	28.67%
3	16.00%
4	6.00%
5 +	0.67%

- We asked, 'how important do you consider it to have international research experience?' With people asked to rate this on a scale of one to ten with ten being the most important. The average response from the 146 people who answered this question was 7.4.
- 66% of respondents did not receive any financial support from their new employer / institution to assist with their move.

What were your reasons for moving?

I view it as essential to progressing my career	53.64%
To experience life outside of your home country	52.98%
It was a placement provided as part of my education	27.15%
Lack of funding / opportunities in my home country	22.52%
Unable to find the job / course in my own country	17.22%
Personal reasons	15.89%
Other	9.27%
Moved for partner / spouse	7.95%

Did you find a position before you moved?

Yes	79.05%
No	16.89%
Other	4.05%

How easy was the process of moving to the country?

Very easy	10.20%
Easy	26.53%
Neither easy nor difficult	31.29%
Difficult	25.85%
Very difficult	6.12%

If you found your new position in advance of the move. How helpful was your new employer / institution in supporting you during the move?

Extremely helpful	12.98%
Very helpful	26.72%
Somewhat helpful	36.64%
Not so helpful	14.50%
Not at all helpful	9.16%

Leaving academia

The survey sought views from people who had left dementia research within the last two years. A total of 61 people who responded to our survey were eligible to answer questions in this section of the survey.

Why did you leave academic dementia research?

Could not find a job	32.50%
Other	32.50%
Needed more stability	25.00%
No funding/ grant	20.00%
Interested in exploring another academic research field	15.00%
Changed to a different sector	10.00%
Private reason	10.00%
Career break	7.50%
Needed a higher income	7.50%
Interpersonal reason	5.00%

Where do you work now?

University based non-research role	34.21%
Non-profit organisation	15.79%
Health care	13.16%
Teaching institute	13.16%
Not currently working	7.89%
Publishing house/ journal	5.26%
Self-employed	5.26%
Policy making	2.63%
Start-up company	2.63%

Does your current position still relate to dementia research?

Yes	58.97%
No	35.90%
None of the above	5.13%

- We asked respondents 'What would it take to bring you back to academic dementia research?' 28% said they would not return to dementia research, 72% said they would return under certain conditions. The top five common themes to emerge were 1. Improved stability / permanent position 2. Opportunity to work part-time 3. Increased funding 4. More jobs particularly at a senior level 5. Improved geography e.g., positions which were not in major cities / closer to home.

We would like to hear your thoughts about your current position - Please rate the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
My academic training prepared me for the position I currently hold	7.69%	2.56%	2.56%	38.46%	33.33%	15.38%
I feel I am making a difference	0.00%	2.56%	15.38%	41.03%	23.08%	17.95%
I am an individual contributor	2.56%	7.69%	10.26%	43.59%	20.51%	15.38%
I have a more manageable workload	5.13%	20.51%	20.51%	15.38%	15.38%	23.08%
Outside of academia, I feel more appreciated	2.56%	7.69%	17.95%	12.82%	12.82%	46.15%
Outside of academia, my employer is more supportive	5.13%	5.13%	20.51%	10.26%	12.82%	46.15%
I prefer this position over a position in academia	10.53%	10.53%	21.05%	5.26%	10.53%	42.11%
Outside of academia, I have a better salary	5.13%	5.13%	20.51%	17.95%	10.26%	41.03%
I am leading a team	10.81%	24.32%	10.81%	24.32%	8.11%	21.62%
I have time to keep up to date with developments in my field	5.13%	17.95%	12.82%	35.90%	7.69%	20.51%

Getting the help you need

In which of the following areas would you find further training useful?

Grant and fellowship writing	58.76%
Building collaborations / working relationships	56.98%
Creating and managing a research budget	47.45%
General career development	45.45%
Research methods	35.25%
Implementation of research findings	33.04%
Publishing research findings	32.59%
Scientific communications / presentation skills	31.71%
Reviewing submitted manuscripts for peer-review and grants for funding	30.82%
Team management	29.49%
Wellbeing and Mental Health	28.82%
Time management	27.49%
Preparing job applications	25.28%
Negotiation skills	25.28%
Using social media	19.51%
Advice on moving / studying overseas	18.40%
CV writing	16.85%
Maintaining clinical skills	10.64%
Study skills	10.42%
Other	3.55%

How would you prefer to receive support / training? Please rate the following in order of preference (1 being your most preferred option and 7 being your least)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Face to face workshops / training sessions	37.47%	25.82%	15.19%	7.59%	4.81%	3.04%	6.08%
One to one support / Mentoring	29.22%	28.72%	14.86%	9.82%	7.81%	6.30%	3.27%
Webinar workshops	17.04%	10.03%	15.04%	18.05%	16.29%	16.79%	6.77%
Small group team working	6.35%	14.47%	25.63%	18.27%	19.54%	11.68%	4.06%
Online support community	5.12%	8.70%	16.88%	20.20%	18.16%	18.16%	12.79%
Podcasts	2.79%	5.84%	5.08%	12.94%	17.51%	23.86%	31.98%
Written case studies / examples	2.28%	6.09%	7.61%	13.45%	15.48%	20.30%	34.77%

Considering the research culture in the country where you work, what changes would you like to see implemented?

Responses
I would like to see changes towards the promotion of research integrity, ethics, and reproducibility.
Increase in funding.
<p>1. Get rid of 100% soft money for PhDs. It's a devastating culture with no safety net compared with clinicians that can increase their clinical load if they don't have enough grant funds. This compounded by loss of productivity, personnel during COVID has created an epidemic of people leaving academic research for "safer" jobs and burnout.</p> <p>2. Greater emphasis on work/life balance, whatever that is for the individual.</p> <p>3. Increase training and compensation (or dedicated university time) for grant reviews. Trainee grants are often reviewed above the trainee level because reviewers are not always properly trained or experienced (or knowledgeable of changes). This could alleviate some of the barriers to trainees if grants were reviewed appropriately</p> <p>4. Increase support or protection for individuals experiencing barriers or increased barriers to promotion (single parents, women, parents with kids experiencing trauma/mental illness, caregivers to parents, etc).</p>
Mentors often lack understanding that, in Brazil, students are volunteers and are devoting huge effort for the work. We lack proper support.
A written formal policy on how authorship on papers should be decided - I sometimes do not get the due credit for my contribution. Despite doing most of the work, I don't get to be the first author, my PI does.
Less pressure to produce positive results, which forces those working hard but getting negative findings to work even harder, long hours etc.
Access to knowledge and sharing information. There is a need of a new educational system based on research instead of examinations.
Awareness about research culture and ways to get into should be extensive among young graduates. Obtaining funding and agencies supporting the cause should increase. Good stipend and consistent salary should be must to motivate researchers who are yet to make a mark.
I think good research funding and research collaboration is essential, public awareness about mental health and ways to improve is equally important. These are possible if government frames newer health policies favouring health care and pharmaceutical industries at the same time.
Capacity building in research methods and management, implementation of research outcomes.

I consider that in addition to learning directly on the field, there should be mentoring or guidance as the work is performed. In addition, teamwork and an efficient division of tasks should be reinforced.
Research is not considered as a job per se. It's just something that you do in your free time, that, along with the lack of grants, are major barriers in my country.
That reviewers accept that not all researchers are native English-speakers. Maybe more help in the writing of manuscripts.
Brazil is going through terrible times for researchers. The judiciary just cut 92% of the funding for the science ministry. This results in poor facilities and little to no funding for research projects. Also, our scholarships are at least 10 years outdated and certainly don't cover basic living costs. This reflects directly in our research culture through human capital flight, funding lobbying, and underachievement's for potential great scientists.
Make changes to reduce the workaholic culture of academia. Reduce bias favouring quantitative and biological research only rather than also incorporating qualitative research and social determinants.
A change in attitude toward non-tenure tract PhDs. A structured salary would help. XXX gives pay raises to graduate students and post-docs, but the academic institutions do not, so the scientific laboratory staff with PhDs are getting paid less than the students that they must train in lab. The older you are the greater the pay discrepancy.
I'd like to see a shift towards research rigor, rather than publishing novelty results that are under-powered and under-tested.
I find that even within dementia research there are real silos in my university. So, I work in informatics, and have very little contact with those in old age psychiatry doing similar work, and even less with those in neuropsychiatry and neuroimaging - but it has been when there is contact between these groups that the best work happens. It seems it is up to individuals rather than being the default culture. There is also an issue with doctoral students and postdocs being used to provide a service rather than being able to contribute with ideas, especially where research culture / reproducibility is concerned.
Research should be more inclusive.
Avoid extra working time
Improvements in how foreign-trained scientists are considered - respect for the minority group.
The dementia research community in the Netherlands doesn't seem to welcome non-Dutch speaking researchers. All the webinars on information about national grants, grant calls etc. are in Dutch. This is not the case for grants for basic sciences or engineering. As an early career researcher moving into the field of dementia research, language is the biggest barrier for me.
Greater collaboration regionally and internationally. Protected time for service and leadership training .

1. Intensively collaborative research that will strengthen science and engender collaborations: people are mostly not involved in peer collaborations.
I would like early career researchers to be given more research skills trainings, more access to research funds and mentorship.
Acceptance of other forms of grant funding outside of XXX that would count toward tenure and promotion.
More funding for early career investigators.
Teamwork and collaboration support, providing necessary tools for work so as to produce excellent results.
Respect for boundaries (e.g., not having the expectation to reply and be engaged all the time), importance of resting and disconnecting, better benefits (salary increase, vacation, better contributions to health insurance), more transparency, more collaboration, and less competition.
More support for collaboration and networking.
Changes in expectations such that what can be accomplished in a 40-hour work week is the expectation. More life/work balance.
We need to form local teams and cross institutional partnerships to know the field being worked on by other researchers.
More support, collaboration, and mentoring.
The more transparent policy-making, the less biased grant-awarding.
A more streamlined review process. Time to get papers published and time to get grants reviewed and funded is so slow it impacts career trajectories.
Better opportunities for research collaboration.
Changes that stop the number of publications and grants awarded as the only real measure of success
I would like to get more advice on how to effectively run a team.
I would like to see the government show interest in dementia research. Countries like the US have committed funds and resources to end Alzheimer's and other dementias but in sub-Saharan Africa dementia is still considered alongside witchcraft and generational curses. We need grants like they make available for malaria.
Supporting those on fixed-term contracts with continued funding to allow for them to go for their own grants rather than going from project to project.
A greater emphasis of translation of research into practice rather than doing research for research's sake. (Which I know does happen in some cases, but I also have come across far too many researchers thinking 'that'll make a good paper' rather than 'that will make lives better for people living with dementia').

I would like to see that science is valued more. A career in science is like a funnel, the opportunities in academia for PhD graduates are limited and the compensation is very little.
I think there is at times a (for lack of a better phrase) unconscious bias of clinicians towards developing the careers of younger clinicians over individuals who come from different backgrounds. I don't perceive this as intentional in any way, just that they are more familiar with the experience of the career development path for clinical researchers and find it easier to navigate, such that it is more difficult for researchers with non-clinical backgrounds to advance. So I would offer more training/mentoring for non-clinical researchers in terms of how to succeed in a clinical environment as well as for clinical PIs how to help manage the careers of their non-clinical colleagues.
How our time is incentivized related to academic tenure requirements. If you do any type of community-engaged research among underserved and under-engaged communities, establishing a trusting and viable relationship with these communities take time.
I would like to see more emphasis on anti-racism and focussing the needs of our most marginalized (e.g., being data driven.) Often our DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) efforts are very vague, lazy, and ignorant to our country(s) histories. Indigenous and Black people have very different histories than anyone else about genocide and enslavement. These two groups and their intersecting identities (women, disabled, etc) are not protected or supported in a way that is specific and separate from other slightly disadvantaged groups.
Reduced bureaucracy involved in the path of implementing a study.
I would like to see greater opportunities for stable, permanent positions in dementia research, including more 'staff scientist' positions that allow for talented lab-based scientists to continue working in the lab beyond their post-doc work. At present, the career pipeline through the end of post-doc is relatively straightforward, but the majority of highly trained dementia researchers seem to leave the field after their post-doc because of a lack of stable job opportunities.
Norms of working all the time, including nights and weekends. Norm of reliance on "free labour" from doctoral students and post docs on training grants or other funding that only benefits the rich institutions.
Brazilian research field needs more funding and incentives.
Lobby to increase pay for postdocs, we have huge loans, are facing huge career uncertainty, and yet only get small financial benefits.
An increase in tenure opportunities.
There is often an issue of information overload with lots of resources, information, and classes available but hard to work out what is suitable or useful to myself.
There is a general theme in those pursuing academic careers that they constantly need more mentorship. One can reach major career milestones (e.g., assistant professor) but the message even at this stage is that 'you are not ready' for your career position. The constant push for mentored research awards exacerbates this issue and often creates a power structure within academia that discourages independence (despite stated missions) and does not embolden early career investigators to create their own research programs.

The framing of this exercise I think indicates a problem: as a staff scientist I'm neither tenured nor tenurable, so I count as an early career researcher in some ways that may matter to you. I'm potentially in your audience for short courses on "preparing your first grant proposal," for instance. But this is silly in some other ways: I'm thirteen years post-PhD and have spent close to a decade of the time since then in this field. I'd like to see an understanding develop that the fairy-tale of a uniform career arc in which all researchers attain tenure and do it by forty doesn't reflect a research community that actually needs people in interstitial positions like mine.
More leniency for mental health, especially during a pandemic
I would like to see more realistic standards. Setting goals that push you but are achievable. More positive understanding when mistakes are made.
More in person activities with the doctors so the Research Assistants can acquire skills for their professional lives
More research opportunities (e.g., XXX grants) should be provided to people without a citizenship / green card.
It would be especially helpful if the physicians/PIs in my department offered regular lectures on the basics of clinical diagnosis and management of dementia. At this point, it seems that most lectures are, while still important, extremely specific. For example, dementia in LGBTQ community, dementia in people with Down's, etc.
I would like to see more support around writing publications and the promotion of one's work.
I would like to see more encouragement placed on research outputs/ publishing papers before starting a PhD, for example when working as a Research Assistant.
Coherent and specific information to us, including visa status (i.e. not just workshops for awards for which only citizens are eligible).
More diversity, maternity leave, gap in publication record normalised for mothers.
Clearer career paths for ECRs and being encouragement to stay in academic.
Better work like balance, it is present only verbally but not practiced at senior level, then the assertion that ERC do not need to work as the seniors do does not seem very persuasive
Understanding of different cultures. As an international postdoc I am asked to adapt completely and sometimes get judged/told off for behaviours because they do not fit the culture here.
More practical training e.g. public speaking, conferences, networking.
Make it more acceptable for people to work normal working hours and it not hinder people careers if they have other illness or commitments that means they can't put in loads of extra time.
I would like to see the whole research process to go faster. From seed idea to publishing takes a long time everywhere but it feels longer in here.
At this moment it is difficult do research in my country. The government does not support science.

Doctoral students should be given a perspective in science as they are trained in scientific work. However, the cost pressure is too high and the increasing demand in this sector for good jobs cannot be satisfied. More funds are needed!

The researchers working in dementia science at my institution are spread across multiple departments and there is no networking of collaboration across the different domains.

The funders are all talking a good talk about being there to support and prioritise early career researchers, but they do nothing to actually make the process of applying easier for the applicant.

I am on a personal Fellowship and have spent the entirety of the last year writing applications for further funding, not doing the science that I am being paid to do.

The xxx funder require you to write an application in two parts for a Starting Grant - Part A and B. They only consider part B - 15 pages - if you get through the first round which is based on Part A alone. I'm sure this helps their administrative burden, but it is utterly incomprehensible that researchers should have to write this second part that might never get read by a scientist if you're rejected after the reviewers have read Part A.

Two other funders xxx and xxx, who again talk about prioritising Early Career Researchers, but their grant submission system includes questions pertaining to risk management, public engagement etc. These are all things that I feel applicants should be asked for IF they are successful - more has to be done to make the application process easy for the applicants.

Similarly, I've recently applied for an xxx Fellowship. It's taken them 2 months, to tell me that my application has just passed the triage stage and been sent out for review. The whole process could and should be a lot quicker - maybe start paying reviewers so that you can guarantee they'll get their comments back in a timely fashion, schedule the grant review boards accordingly.

At the moment it takes what, 7-9 months from application to final decision. Why can't this be 3? Again, I understand that this eases administrative burden on the funders' staff but ultimately, it's researchers who suffer - the researchers who the funders say they are desperate to keep in science.

I've done the wellbeing seminars, the grant writing training, the mentoring etc. I don't think early career researchers need more of this - they need funders to be better.

I'd like to stimulate students to provide early interest in local research, empowering regional leaderships with political potentials.

I believe that science ought to be more valued in the country where I work. Increase in financial resources (to ameliorate infrastructure, to hire more professionals, to invest in science and research) would provide a stabler work environment, as well as stimulate the entry of more students and professionals in the dementia field of research. Moreover, international opportunities should be more encouraged, as it invites professionals to discover different fields, work cultures and research.

More support for mental health issues for students and more encouraging to ask bigger research questions.

More grant opportunities. Better opportunities for woman.

More mentored-research funding for early career researchers in Nigeria. There is need to deliberately invest in, emphasizing and encouraging mentorship starting from postgraduate training.
Criteria for grants and CV focuses on number of publications, not journal quality/citation. Currently, people focus to publish small non-impact things and still keep on going without advancing research.
The burn-out culture in America that the number of hours you spend in the lab is tied to your worth as a scientist.
Mentoring and research-oriented environment.
Higher salaries and stability, measures against endogamy and favouring attitudes, more scientific critical perspective, and discussions.
Equitable participation and reciprocity as values in research that I would prefer to take into consideration.
The workloads are unmanageable in my institution, placing a lot of stress and pressure to perform/publish/secure grants on the ECRs. Our leaders should be fostering productivity through other metrics like collaborations and implementation/translation of research.
Less hierarchical working environment.
I would love to see the behaviour, norms, and attitude of our research community change. I would love to see the implementation of local research take the front line
More one to one mentoring, building connections across different teams at the same University.
Greater support for researchers in aspects of training and financial aids, more attention should be paid to important research findings as well as institutionalizing of a good platform where research findings can be better communicated.
There is also need for support with state-of-the-art research facilities in Tertiary institutions and revitalization of the educational curriculum in institutions.
Less pressure to work overtime, the expectations, and pressures on ECR/LCR researchers is obscene.
A large part of our research culture relies on Postdocs, however, increasingly we are seeing ECRs leaving academia at this stage and not progressing. I think, especially now that funding is even more difficult to get a hold of more support is required here.
Greater integration between senior team and junior team, so that ECR can learn from others. At times it feels like a battle to tap into that expertise to learn and develop.
There is a pervasive attitude that early career researchers should keep long hours and sacrifice a lot for their work. I would like to see this changed, with more pressure on senior staff and universities to create PhD- and postdoc-positions that can readily be completed within the given time frame. I think we risk losing many promising researchers because many believe it is not possible to combine a research career with other life goals such as having a family.

A true commitment to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion marked by: 1) pipeline development for scholars from diverse communities, including promotion and tenure; and 2) not relegating these diverse scholars to only work focused on community outreach and related engagement and efforts; otherwise, recognizing scholars as experts and not simply pigeonholing them due to ethnocidal and/or gender identification.
As an academician our type of school often carries a high teaching load in comparison to other health sciences schools. Workload responsibilities e.g., 60% or 80% in non-research areas impacts research productivity.
Possibility to combine research with working in the field/in practice. I get this opportunity by the employer. Which is great. But now the project is ending it is more difficult to find new funding.
There are not enough open positions in the few labs we have in my country, and the PIs usually give the positions for students from their University / group. I feel that you need to beg in order to get a position in the field.
I think there needs to be more work-life balance within my research culture. Every time I talk to someone who has left, they often cite the reason that there was no work-life balance. We are driving out and burning out brilliant minds because of a never-ending cycle of work. There also needs to be more opportunities to talk about not just academic research but industry research as well. Too many academic mentors are either against having their mentees going into industry because it isn't "prestigious" enough or they just don't know anything about the field. Providing opportunities to learn more about all of the types of jobs out there will prevent young researchers from taking a job just because they think it is their only option.
Establishment of clear and realistic expectations for early career researches that might not have the same skills necessary. It is understandable that there are timelines and expectations in an academic calendar, but sometimes postdocs work very hard, but time is just not enough.
That it is considered very important to gain experience abroad. While I understand there is added value, I do also think that you can be good researcher and also want to stay at your home country because of children/family. While things are slowly changing, I think it is still extremely difficult for a female researcher to have both a career and children.
Not take in account age when talking about early-stage researchers. It looks like everyone assume that if you are over 40 or 50, you cannot be one.
Make sure it becomes possible to maintain clinical skills or further get experience on that while doing research.
Equal opportunities offered to all members of the lab given their position (e.g., equal between all PhD students).
Greater support for people transitioning from being a PhD student to post-doc. More funding for small pots of money to be able to transition from PhD to post-doc.
Accepting that people need to take time off for weekends or family or vacation.
Better opportunities for dementia care researchers equal to those in biomedicine. The balance is weighted towards traditional areas with health services research often required to fit into structures that are not designed for this type of research.

In China we need improved government support so that research institutions can provide more opportunities and support for our young researchers;
The culture that values overwork / burnout needs to be changed. Academics are constantly complaining about it but setting horrible examples at the same time. It doesn't help when a PI complains about being tired or not having time off if they continue to work over normal hours or weekends, silently expecting trainees to do the same. In addition, the lack of respect for trainees is just sad. I was particularly bothered by a meme that was around social media recently saying that you need to copy your PI on the emails in order to receive a reply (it had a lion and a young lion). What kind of environment is this where only people with a certain level of fame, success, years of work deserve a reply?
More support for early career investigators, specifically MD/PhD investigators. Current have a XXX grant budgets are insufficient to support salaries for physician scientists (assuming a salary of \$150-200k/year, with an R01 budget of ~\$200k/year, one can pay one's salary, but have no funds left over for anything else). There should also be more emphasis on rigorous, translational, and basic research and less emphasis on impact factor of publications. A third problem is the systemic bias built into the academic research hierarchy. There need to be more resources devoted to promoting careers of scientists from underrepresented backgrounds.
More flexibility for mothers. They can achieve as much as others, they just need more flexibility.
Transparency of the research process (in terms of research methods but also research management), especially for reproducibility and open science. Also, a shift in the incentives for researchers (e.g. fewer but better quality publications).
In every organisation I have worked at, I have experienced ageism as a young ECR working in dementia research. It is only through dogged stubbornness and a genuine commitment to improving the lives of people living with dementia that I have continued to work in a field in which higher-ups do not respect me.
The culture to always stand on the tip of your toes and most of the time more hours are worked than stated in your contract (I don't mind, but I think that's why a lot of people won't choose research).
I would like some honest conversations in regards to expressing what you know and what you didn't know. Separately, a more collaborative environment would be nicer (in a more general sense, not that each lab is competing with another lab or anything like that).
Reducing pressure on high impact publications, lack of career flexibility if don't want to be PI but still want to stay in academia, culture of expectations for ambition/dedicating life to science. Funding considering other achievements, and culture of the lab - i.e. bullying and harassment preventing PIs from getting funding. Better reporting of such instances, it is never actually anonymous or set up in a away to help PhD students etc. Far more diversity and investment in science careers right from school, far more support for those from underrepresented backgrounds, and from the angle of its the right thing to do, not because it will better science.
Research does not consider the challenges faced by marginalized communities and judges everyone based on an assumption that everyone has equal opportunities. This needs to change or some groups will always be left bind and seen as inferiors.
Allowing more freedom to ECR to develop their own ideas, while supporting them.

There is not enough exchange between researchers within the field; even less between disciplines. ECRs but also later stage researchers are typically working on very short-term contracts which also hinders professional relationship building.
Awareness of language barriers for researchers.
Change in the attitude towards ECRs/PhD - i.e., including them in the grant applications (common argument is lack of track of record); clear and reasonable, maybe negotiable expectations; increasing the value of social sciences in general - in my country the basic science research is always first.
Efforts on diversity and inclusion, mentoring should be increased.
There is very little collaboration between research centres. I would love to see more knowledge and resource exchange between the different locations.
This idea that everyone doing a PhD wants to stay in academia, it is not true and it wouldn't be possible if everyone wanted to do so. But we are not trained at all to leave academia, what options there are, what skills we can use that we have gained here that we can use beyond academia, it feels like you just got to figure it out yourself or happen to encounter someone offering a workshop on these topics, it is definitely not talked about on a regular basis, not even every half a year or so in department meetings.
PhDs: Better funding for PhD students and a change in expectations that all PhD students are in their early 20s. Many are older with financial and personal commitments, with professional experience in a range of settings, and the current system is not tailored to this type of student.
Collaboration: Work is very siloed and there should be more opportunity for joined up working. As a research assistant, there is limited opportunity to engage with colleagues outside of my immediate team.
Career progression: There should be a clear path with more permanent roles at post-doctoral level. This would allow staff the time and space to carry out great research, without worrying about their temporary contract/paying the mortgage and having to spend lots of time applying for grants. It feels that staff have to be very confident, self-promotional, and 'build their own career'. It feels like you are on your own without a safety net.
Working style: After working in the charity sector, the pace of work in academia feels very slow. Because grant applications are written three years in advance, there is little flexibility to change aspects of the work without going through bureaucratic processes. The publishing process is slow and clunky, and places too much time responsibility on the authors (e.g. to format their text/ references) rather than a copy editor at the journal. The peer review process should be streamlined, by commenting on and editing a collaborative document, instead of writing a letter with outlined changes to the manuscript.
There seems to be a culture of overworking. For example, before the first lockdown I noticed a lot of people would stay at the office until quite late (after 6pm). I also know a lot of people in the field who work quite regularly on weekends or at home during the evening. One Professor even told me that most people don't manage to finish their PhD on time with just working office hours. I absolutely don't mind sometimes working an evening, or occasionally having to complete some things on the weekend. But as a PhD student I get the feeling that regularly working during evenings and weekends is the norm and expected from me. I feel a constant tension between wanting to look after my mental wellbeing and keeping a healthy work-life balance, and wanting to

meet the norm/expectation of working extra. At times when I left the office around 5pm, or a bit earlier because I started at 8am that day, I felt guilty and lazy for not staying longer. I get the feeling that overworking is necessary to succeed in an academic career. I worked in academic settings in different countries, and the pressure to overwork I feel the most here in the UK.
More collegial relations and collaborations. Working within research can be very isolating.
Making sure that and knowing how the research findings will be implemented in practice.
How long working hours are the norm and if you're not working on things in the evenings/weekends how some may see you as less devoted. Expectation that you know what you're doing, research is a very niche area and until you've been there a while it can take time to understand how things run - there is the expectation that you know about grants, h index and how submitting to journals works when you start and this is not the case for lots of people.
Less emphasis on publications / Less sexism and bully in the workplace / More practical support for PhD students when learning new skills (e.g. research budgets).
Less competitive, less focus on working a lot, less focus on publications
More teamwork, more focus on working efficiently and enjoying other things besides work, more focus on the skill acquired and team-effort.
I am satisfied with my work environment. I think it has helped me develop in ways I never expected. Perhaps the only thing I would add is more women mentors in dementia research.
Probably more opportunities to do internships abroad. And in general, I would like more international collaboration as it really makes a difference in learning different ways of conducting research.
Better recognition of child and elder care responsibilities of women researchers and support for researchers experiencing domestic abuse.
During my PhD, the overwork culture was extremely prevalent. Now during my Postdoc, the opposite is true, I have a much healthier work-life balance. However, the biggest issue I am currently facing in my Postdoc is managing the transition out of academia or onto my next position. I feel like with a thesis, you have a clear end point, however, this does not exist with a postdoc!
Knowledge sharing. Sharing failures and negative data. Work life balance. Demystifying academic pathway.
Support for young PIs in finding their way in the institutional policies/habits. Receiving resources that are needed to start a lab (space, furniture,...)
More career development opportunities and more alignment between funding agencies and academic institutions.
Realistic resourcing of staff against workload. Clearer communication of the remit/responsibility of team members. Dedicated project team/programming person.
I would like academic institutions to move away from a culture of fixed term contracts that have almost no consideration for developing researchers and their own ideas. All too often excellent researchers go from contract to contract to work on other people's ideas, which is fine to a point - but there is a lack of solid continuity to support development. Attending courses etc and bridging schemes are good, but they do not address the key structural issue.
Hate that you "should" be working constantly and producing. It is so overwhelming and can strip all joy from the process. The culture also almost encourages poor research practices with its focus on productivity. It may also lead mentors to take advantage of mentees.
Universities or organisations respecting the challenge of early /mid-career researchers being on short term contract. This needs to happen on a large-scale level, where there is more core funding available, but also needs to happen on a personal level, where time is given for job/grant applications and awareness of the mental health impact from supervisors.
I love what I do but the two things that keep me awake at night and really cause unnecessary stress are a) publication peer review and b) uncertainty of academic careers post-PhD. There

should be more of a push by funders to evaluate an ECRs promise regardless of how many peer-reviewed publications they have because this isn't always a reflection of their work but also is influenced by factors such as how prominent their supervisor is... it creates a massive imbalance in the community and impedes researchers from newly formed or smaller research groups which isn't fair. It's a real stress and personally I've found peer review to be a biased and an unnecessarily painful route that only exists within academia. I don't know how to fix the issue of postdoc uncertainty, but it seems crazy to expect people to work creatively at the best of their abilities when they are worried about whether they'll be able to pay their next month's rent or have to up and move suddenly. There must be a better way to divvy out grant funding or salary support for postdocs that is less damaging.

More inclusion of people who are not currently in the field (be that by race, gender, sexuality, disability and so on). Also a move to more normal patterns of work- whilst it is possible to work 9-5 (or same hours in a time that works for you) to get to senior levels you still need to do significantly more than this.

Next Steps

Where do you go from here? Surveys and reports like this are not just about taking a snap-shot of how the ECR dementia research community feel at a moment in time, but also looking forward. This survey work started by ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers is a continuous work in progress - a way to track our and others' impact and improvements over time. Below is an outline of the next steps for continuing to keep in touch with the community and act on what has been learned.

1. **Support** - The ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers will work to deliver support in the priority areas identified by respondents to this survey and respond to regional needs.
2. **Analysis** - The ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers will undertake analysis on the survey results and work towards publishing the findings in open access journals.
3. **Ongoing** - The ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers will undertake further survey work to continue to monitor and further explore the topics explored in this survey, including at a continent level.
4. **Communications** - The ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers work to share these results with research funders, institutions, policy makers and those who can support addressing the issues raised.
5. **Partnerships** - The ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researcher will seek out partnerships with organisations to deliver support and encourage delivery of improvements.

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- UCLH / UCL NIHR Biomedical Research Centre
- Survey respondents

This report was facilitated by the Alzheimer's Association International Society to Advance Alzheimer's Research and Treatment (ISTAART), through the PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers. The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication represent those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the PIA membership, ISTAART or the Alzheimer's Association.

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Leader comments

Dr Maria C. Carrillo, Chief Science Officer, Alzheimer's Association "This survey sheds light on the challenges faced by early career Alzheimer's researchers, and we look forward to glean insights that will help us better support them and their work. This next generation of researchers are crucial to the future of Alzheimer's research and treatment, and will ultimately lead us to understand even more about the biology of Alzheimer's and dementia, develop new tools for earlier and more accurate diagnoses, and establish novel avenues for treatments."

Martin Rossor, Professor of Clinical Neurology at University College London "This is an important piece of work, bringing attention to the challenges faced by early career researchers across the world. Increasing funding and improving research culture will help ensure we can attract and retain people and this work will help identify how to prioritise and deliver those improvements."

Dr Rosa Sancho, Head of Research, Alzheimer's Research UK "Early Career Researchers (ECRs) play significant roles in delivering the projects that we fund. They are central to creating a rich and diverse research culture and connecting the dementia research field through the networks they form. It is critical that we listen to the needs of ECRs and support career pathways that can be challenging and vulnerable to loss of talent. Our vision of a world without dementia is only possible through nurturing talented and dedicated ECRs to become future leaders."

Malú Gámez Tansey, Professor of Neuroscience and Neurology, University of Florida "As a female scientist of color, I see my responsibility as a leader who has a voice to give early-stage researchers an opportunity to share their ideas by speaking at conferences so they can start making an impact from very early on in their scientific training; and to network and become connected with others who can help them accomplish whatever career outcomes their hearts desire. To make this happen, I work with allies who believe in the importance of multicultural work and training environments because it is the richness of diverse backgrounds and life experiences that will lead us to solve the most challenging problems facing science this century."

Paulo Caramelli, Professor of Neurology, Federal University of Minas Gerais "Early-career researchers play a fundamental role in the advancement of science and this also applies to the field of dementia research. However, students and young investigators face many challenges in their activities, including project funding, job availability, salaries, balance between work and personal life, and pressure to generate original/impactful data. Cultural and linguistic differences represent additional barriers for many individuals. In this sense, the survey conducted by the University College London and the ISTAART PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers constitutes a timely and great initiative to understand the needs of these colleagues and might contribute to develop support programs for their activities, aiming at short- and long-term benefits to improve their lifework."

Appendix - response count

Note - the survey included logic which resulted in features that change survey behaviour, appearance and content based the answers participants give. As a result, not every respondent needed to answer every question. In addition, respondents were only mandated to respond to a small number of questions that influenced the logic, all other questions were non-mandatory and could be skipped.

This appendix provides the detail on the number of actual responses for each question asked.

Question	Number of responses
Q1. I have read and understood the information provided and are happy to proceed.	584
Q2. What is your current position / title / training level?	546
Q3. Do you currently work in the field of dementia research?	546
Q4. Which of the following fields most align with your work? (select all that apply)	546
Q5. In which of the following areas would you find further training useful? (select all that apply)	451
Q6. How would you prefer to receive support / training? Please rate the following in order of preference	404
Q7. Considering the research culture in the country where you work, what changes would you like to see implemented?	220
Q8. What is your age?	442
Q9. What is your nationality?	428
Q10. Are you treated or perceived to be a racial minority or person of color where you currently live?	442
Q11. Do you consider yourself to hold an identity that is underrepresented?	442
Q12. How would you describe your gender?	442
Q13. What is your sexual orientation?	442
Q14. Do you have a disability or learning difficulty?	442
Q15. Do you have any dependents under the age of 18?	442
Q16. Are you a primary caregiver?	442

Q17. Are you the main or sole income earner in your household?	442
Q18. What is the highest level of education achieved by any of your parents / guardians?	442
Q19. Would you consider yourself to be a 'first generation' student?	441
Q20. Which of the following social media platforms do you use for research / work / study related purposes?	442
Q21. What do you use social media for?	440
Q22. Which country are you currently studying / working in?	435
Q23. State / Province	317
Q24. Have you ever relocated to a different country for your studies / work?	435
Q25. What do you think are the most significant challenges in moving internationally for work / study?	417
Q26. How is your current position funded?	419
Q27. How would you categorise your primary place of work / study?	384
Q28. How long is your current contract?	371
Q29. How much time do you have left on your current contract?	369
Q30. How many organisations do you work for / have a contract with?	376
Q31. How many job / position applications did you send to get the position you currently hold?	376
Q33. How happy are you in your current role?	373
Q34. In your research setting, how much time (%) do you spend doing each of the following?	347

Q35. Do you feel you spend an appropriate amount of time engaged in each activity you noted on the previous question?	356
Q36. How would you describe the management style of your current or most recent supervisor / manager?	375
Q37. How does your supervisor / manager's management style suit you?	375
Q38. How frequently do (or did) you meet one-on-one with your current or most recent supervisor / manager?	374
Q39. What do you believe to be the most significant barriers to career progression?	376
Q40. How do you feel about the following statement "The short-term nature of research contracts and funding is a barrier to making advancements and discoveries in dementia research"	374
Q41. Are you thinking of leaving dementia research?	375
Q42. Have you been offered Science Communications Training at your current or previous place or work?	375
Q43. Overall, do you think dementia research is sufficiently funded?	322
Q44. How satisfied are you with the current research funding in your home country?	321
Q45. Do you consider you have sufficient resources for carrying out your research project?	320
Q46. How many applications did you make before receiving your current funding / grant?	319
Q47. How many different funders contribute to the costs of your work / salary?	312
Q48. How many applications have you made so far?	116
Q49. How long have you been looking for a position?	115
Q50. Have employers offered to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications without you needing to ask?	115
Q51. When approaching the end of your contract / funding, were you offered support from your employer / institution to find your next position?	116

Q52. What support would be useful in helping find your next position?	37
Q53. What inspired you to work in the field of dementia research? Please indicate how important the following factors were in your decision	362
Q54. Of the options above, which was the single most important factor?	342
Q55. What do you think about dementia research as a career?	357
Q56. Why did you leave academic dementia research? (select all that apply)	40
Q57. Where do you work now?	38
Q58. What would it take to bring you back to academic dementia research?	39
Q59. Does your current position still relate to dementia research?	39
Q60. We would like to hear your thoughts about your current position	39
Q61. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges for early career researchers to stay in academic dementia research?	344
Q62. Do you receive any of the following work / study related benefits?	341
Q63. Have you ever experienced any of the following? Imposter syndrome, Mental Health issues, Financial problems	350
Q64. As an Early Career Researcher have you ever personally experienced discrimination or prejudice due to: a physical or learning disability (ableism); your age (ageism); your sexual orientation (homophobia); your race (racism); your gender (sexism) or your religion / faith? In the context of academia / your professional life.	350
Q65. Recognising that you may or may not have been affected, do you personally feel that the issues mentioned above are getting better or worse? In the context of academia / your professional life.	341
Q66. What changes / interventions do you think have had the biggest impact on combating the different forms of discrimination listed above?	144
Q67. What changes would you like to see to address these forms of prejudice / discrimination?	140

Q68. What have you found to be the most helpful in managing your Imposter Syndrome?	247
Q69. How well do you feel you are managing your Imposter Syndrome?	245
Q70. How helpful was your employer / institution in dealing with this challenge?	244
Q71. How has your Imposter Syndrome affected you?	235
Q72. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	46
Q73. Please indicate if any of the following, common Mental Health issues affect you?	186
Q74. What have you found to be the most helpful in dealing with your Mental Health issues?	190
Q75. How well do you feel you are managing with your Mental Health issues?	189
Q76. How helpful was your employer / institution in dealing with this challenge?	189
Q77. How have your problems with Mental Health affected you?	186
Q78. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	29
Q79. Please indicate if any of the following, Financial Problems have affected you.	125
Q80. How well do you feel you are coping with your Financial Problems?	126
Q81. Did you seek advice / support from any of the following, with your financial difficulties?	121
Q82. Please indicate if you have used any of the following short / long-term solutions to help improve your financial problems	124
Q83. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	121
Q84. How have your experience of Financial Problems affected you?	121

Q85. If you would like to add anything that you think should be considered for inclusion in guidance to address Financial Problems in research careers, aimed at research funders / research institutions, let us know here.	30
Q86. In what way have you experienced ableism?	17
Q87. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	17
Q88. How has your experience of ableism affected you?	16
Q89. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	3
Q90. In what way have you experienced ageism?	80
Q91. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	72
Q92. How has your experience of ageism affected you?	80
Q93. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	14
Q94. In what way have you experienced homophobia?	18
Q95. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	18
Q96. How has your experience of homophobia affected you?	17
Q97. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	3
Q98. Generally, in what way have you experienced racism in your research career?	37
Q99. Specifically, in what way have you experienced racism?	37
Q100. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	37

Q101. How has your experience of racism affected you?	37
Q102. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	2
Q103. In what way have you experienced discrimination or prejudice based on your religion or faith?	18
Q104. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	19
Q105. How has your experience of religious or faith-based discrimination / prejudice affected you?	17
Q106. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	1
Q107. In what way have you experienced sexism?	121
Q108. If you raised this with your employer / institution. How helpful were they in addressing it?	118
Q109. How has your experience of sexism affected you?	112
Q110. Do you have additional comments on this issue, that would help inform future guidance that we may provide to institutions and research funders?	9
Q111. How would you rate your employer / institution on the following issues?	323
Q112. Have you had access to any training (through your institution or externally) on how to collaborate with other researchers?	325
Q113. How prepared do you feel to engage in a research collaboration with someone who isn't a co-worker?	325
Q114. How frequent are international collaborations in the research group you are a part of (or spent majority of your training)?	325
Q115. Generally speaking, how connected do you feel with the global research community?	326
Q116. Are you currently involved in teaching, in a classroom or workplace setting?	240
Q117. Please describe your teaching activities:	136

Q118. How confident do you feel in your teaching activities?	137
Q119. Have you had any formal institutional support or training to prepare you for teaching activities?	137
Q120. Do you feel your organisation / supervisor should have provided more training / support to enable you to deliver your teaching?	137
Q121. If you would like to add anything that you think should be considered for inclusion in guidance to improve support for teaching, aimed at research funders / research institutions, let us know here.	16
Q122. Do you participate in scientific conferences?	333
Q123. How many conferences do you attend per year?	296
Q124. How many times per year do you present at conferences?	295
Q125. Does your supervisor / manager support you attending conference even when you are not presenting?	293
Q126. What were the most important training resources for producing posters and presentations?	291
Q127. If a conference charged an entrance fee. How would the cost of your conference attendance usually funded?	295
Q128. Would you attend more conferences if they were free / cost was not a factor?	296
Q129. What factors influence your ability to attend conferences?	293
Q130. How much do you think is reasonable for someone of your career stage, to pay for the following?	243
Q131. Have you attended more conferences or fewer conferences since the COVID-19 pandemic began?	292
Q132. Recognising that there are multiple benefits that come from conference attendance. However, what do you see as the main reason to attend?	290
Q133. Of the following options, please select and rank in order of most beneficial elements of conference attendance?	282
Q134. If you could only attend one conference this year, which would it be and why?	141

Q135. How pressured do you feel to publish results of your research?	323
Q136. What are the main problems you face in publishing your research?	314
Q137. Do you feel it is getting easier or harder to publish your research?	323
Q138. How do you usually pay for publication fees?	316
Q139. How many PubMed indexed publications do you currently have?	321
Q140. Have you had any formal training at your institution on scientific writing for publication?	322
Q142. To the best of your knowledge, have any of your publications ever influenced policy, practice or (if clinical / interventional), been implemented?	321
Q143. How do you feel about the growing number of pre-prints?	318
Q144. Do you feel the current peer review publication system is effective, and the best way to undertake the task of ensuring rigor and trust in science publishing?	320
Q145. Have you undertaken a peer review for a journal?	319
Q146. If you answered Yes, to the previous question, did you receive any training on how to undertake a Peer Review, prior to doing the work?	294
Q147. What changes, if any, would you make to the current peer review system?	104
Q148. Have your research projects been delayed as a result of the pandemic?	322
Q149. Did you have to rethink or change your research project as a result of the pandemic?	323
Q150. Did you need to secure an extension or additional funding to enable you to finish your current research?	321
Q151. Has the pandemic impacted your career progression, due to a lack of jobs / funding?	320
Q152. Do you feel your institution / employer has effectively supported you during the pandemic?	323

Q153. Which country did you move from?	135
Q154. Which country did you move to most recently?	139
Q155. How many times have you moved to a different country for you work / studies?	150
Q156. What were your reasons for moving?	151
Q157. How important do you consider it to have international research experience?	146
Q158. Did you find a position before you moved?	148
Q159. How easy was the process of moving to the country you mentioned earlier?	147
Q160. If you found your new position in advance of the move. How helpful was your new employer / institution in supporting you during the move?	131
Q161. If you found your new position in advance of the move. Did you receive financial support from your employer / institution?	134