

## About the FA Balance & Gait Study

### A Longitudinal Laboratory and Real-world Study of Gait and Balance in People with Friedreich's Ataxia

The FA Balance & Gait Study is a research study funded by The French Friedreich's Ataxia Association (AFAF). It is managed by Newcastle University and is taking place at The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Friedreich's ataxia is one of the most common recessively inherited disorders affecting movement and balance. It is estimated to affect one in every 50,000 people. People with Friedreich's ataxia have balance and co-ordination difficulties. This causes clumsiness, unsteadiness and frequent falls. It can also cause speech and swallowing difficulties, weakness in the legs and sensory issues such as numbness and tingling sensations.

This study aims to identify tools that can reliably measure the severity of the symptoms of ataxia in people with Friedreich's ataxia, and how these symptoms change over time (disease progression).

We are planning to recruit 16 individuals (aged between 14 and 65 years) with a confirmed genetic diagnosis of Friedreich's ataxia.

As this study involves in studying the balance and walking pattern, every participant is expected to walk a short distance (20 metres) without using a walking aid.

The research study will take place at Clinical Ageing Research Unit (CARU) in Newcastle upon Tyne and there will be three study visits over 12 months.

Each study visit, which will last approximately four hours, will involve a number of assessments including measurements of walking, balance, and cognitive functions. There will also be a number of questionnaires to complete.

If you would like further information about taking part in the study, please contact the study team on **0191 208 3105** or email [nuth.mitoresearch@nhs.net](mailto:nuth.mitoresearch@nhs.net).