

Cognitive change in older cardiac rehabilitation patients

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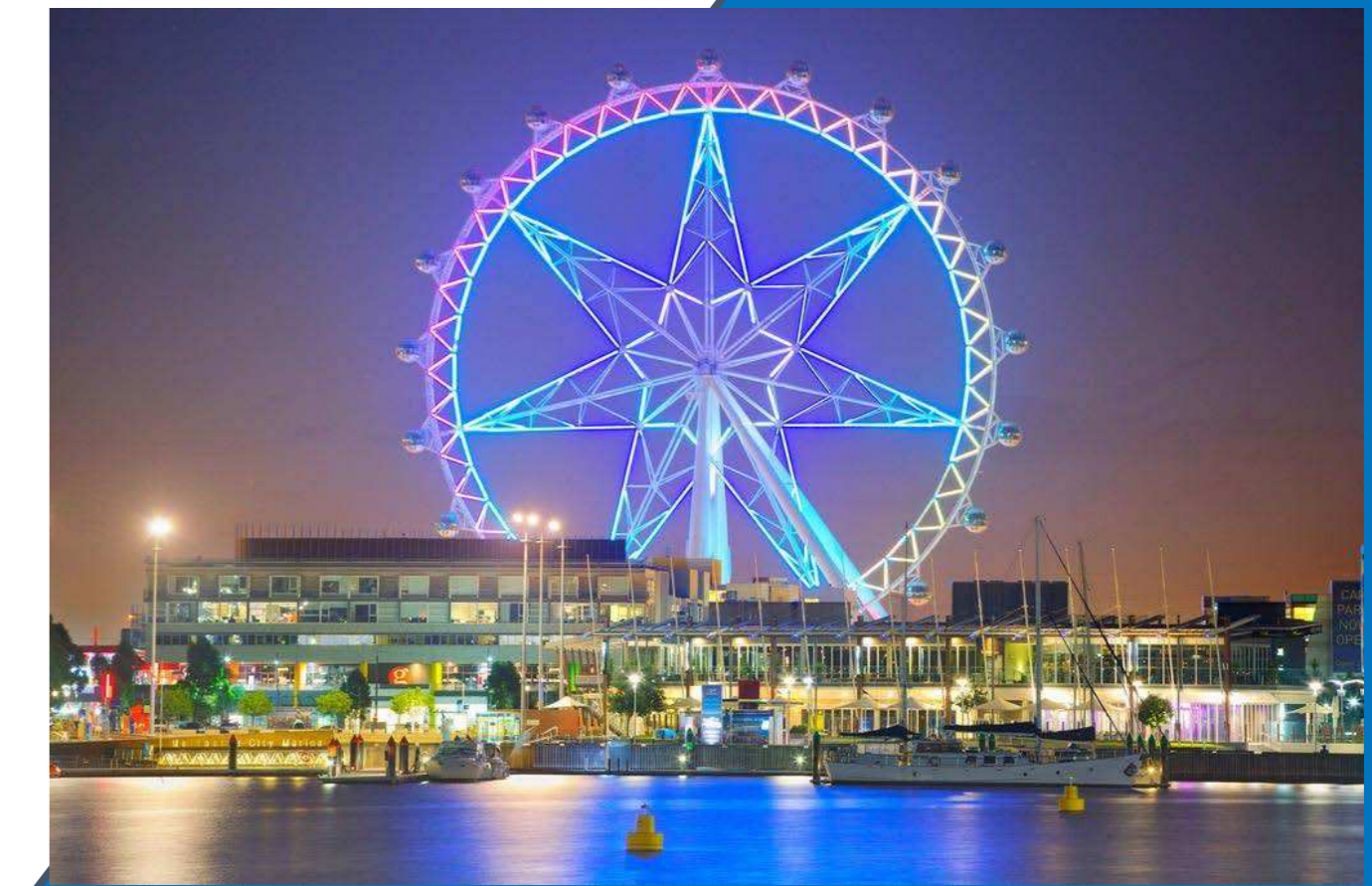
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Introduction

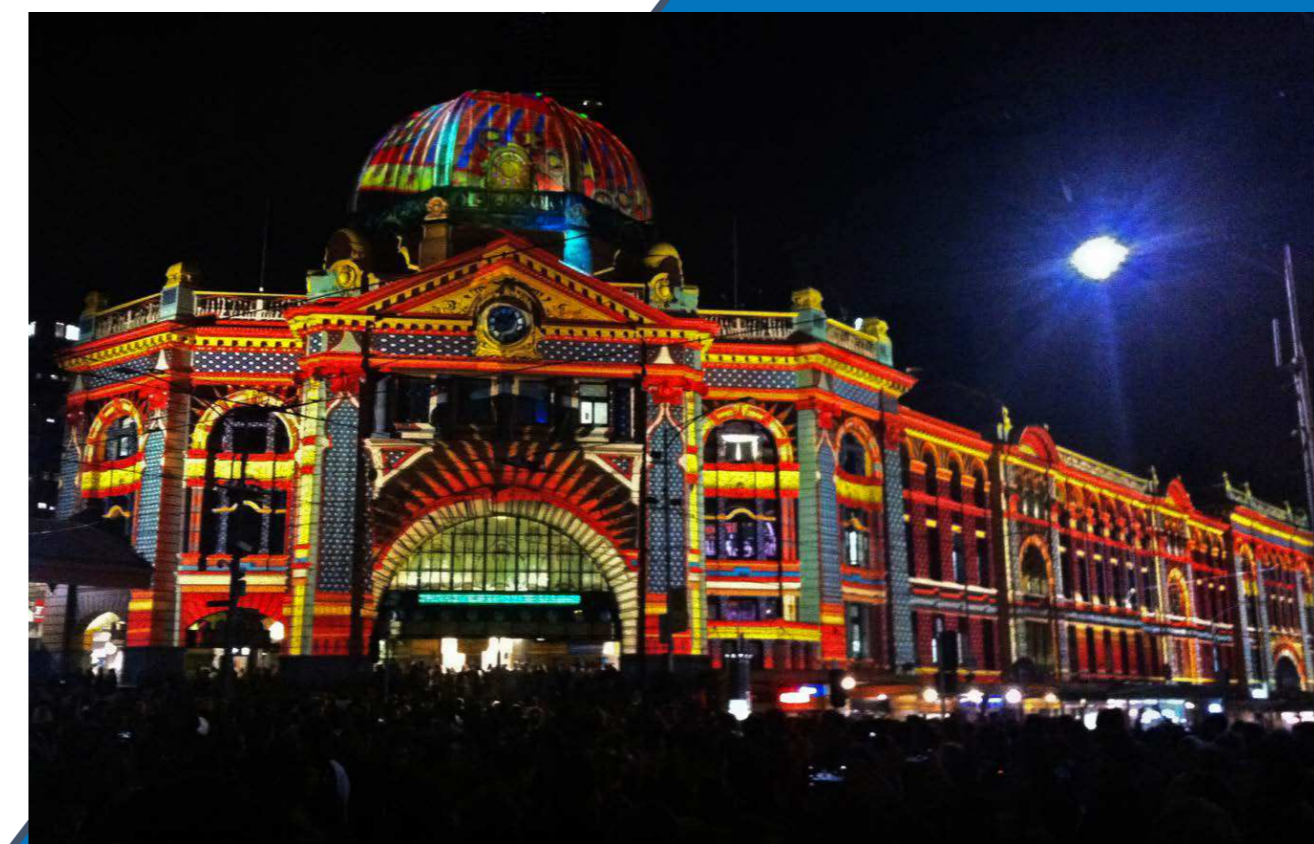
There is evidence that improvements in cognitive performance can follow exercise and lifestyle interventions.

The study aimed to evaluate cognitive changes in older patients with coronary artery disease during cardiac rehabilitation.



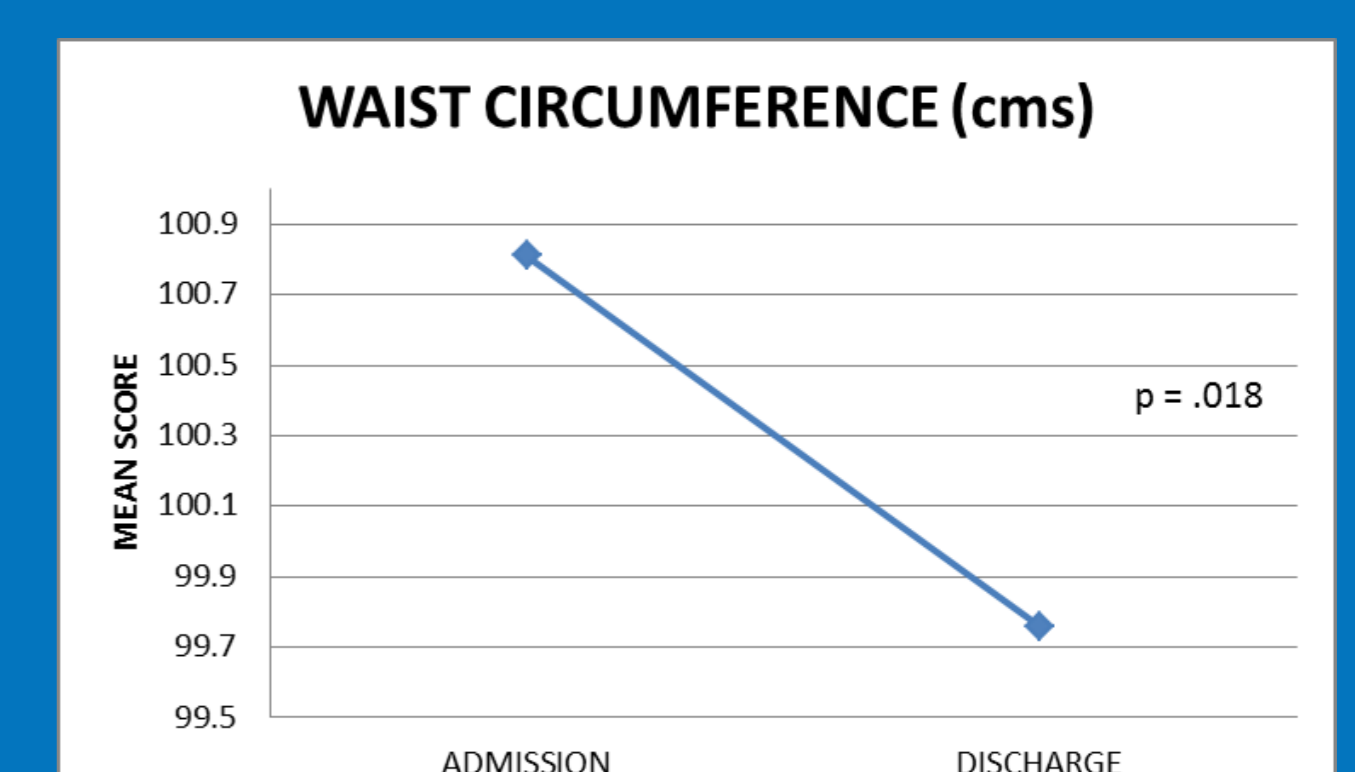
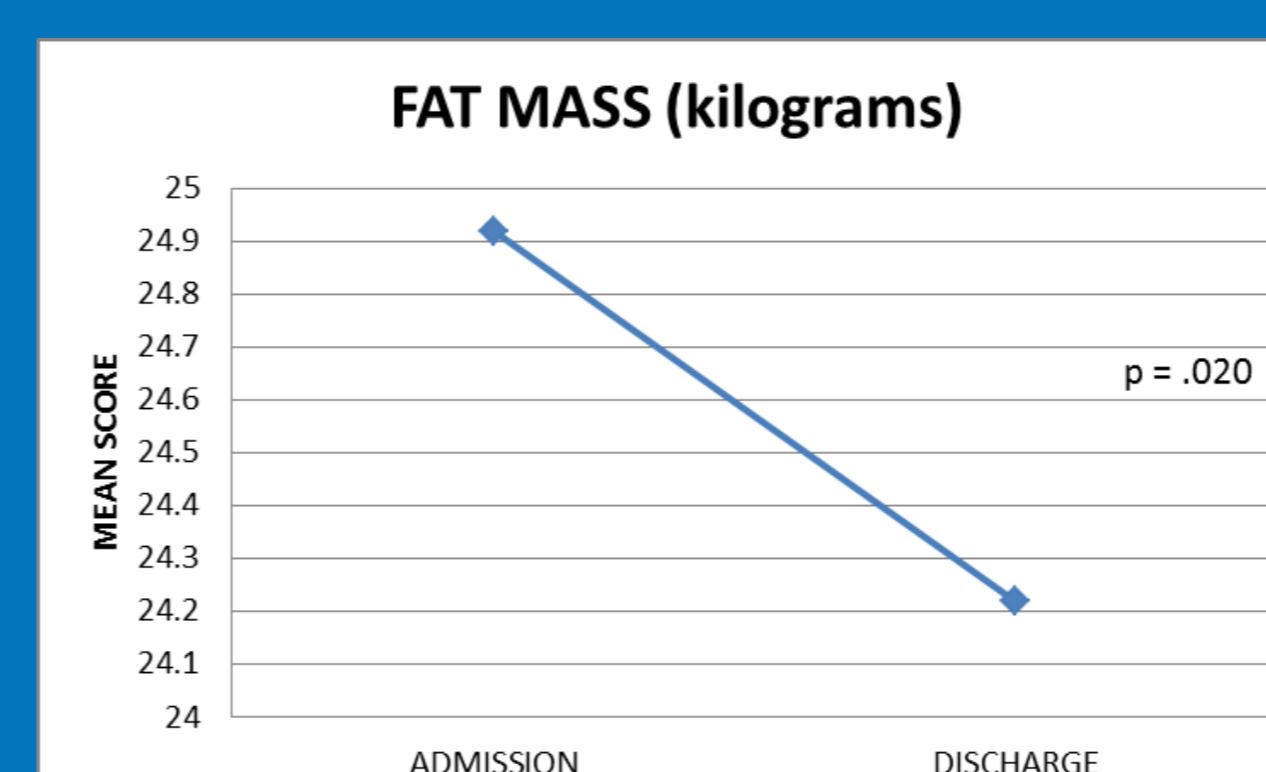
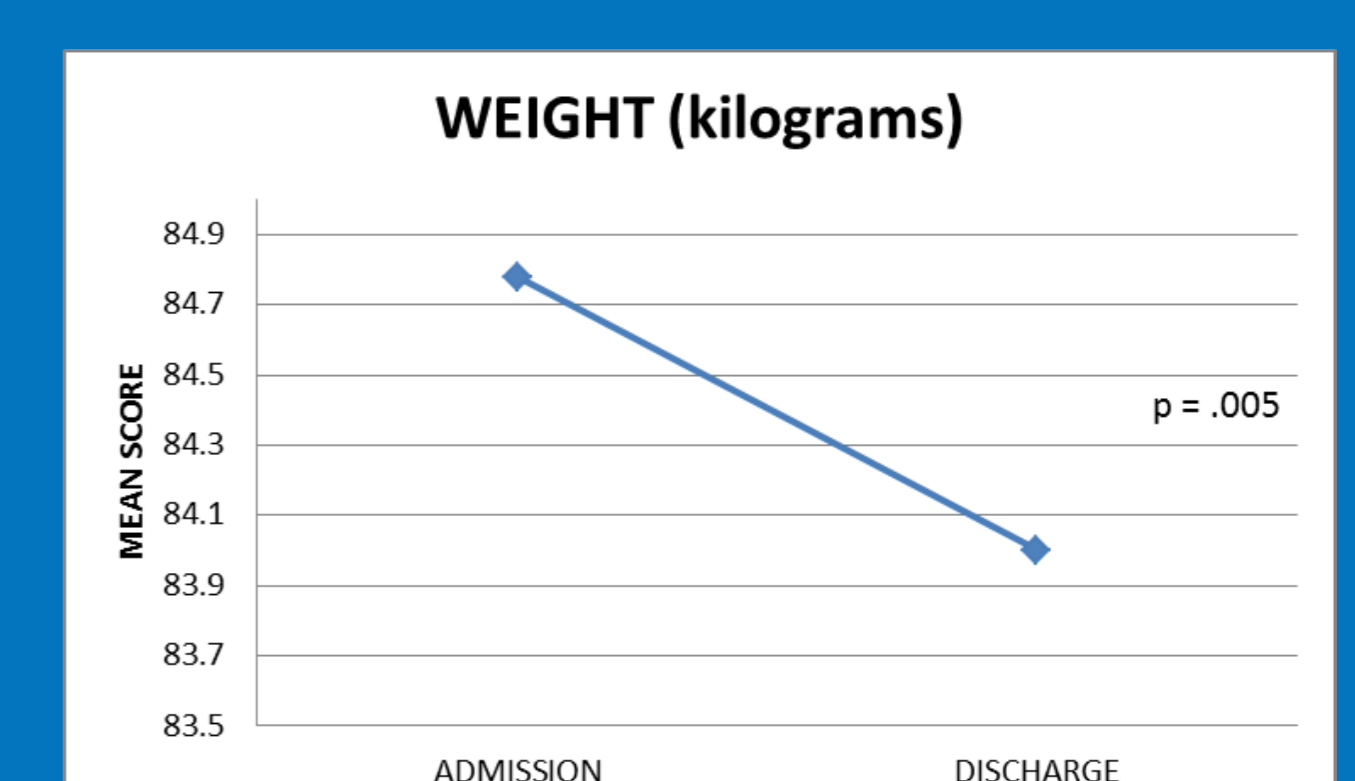
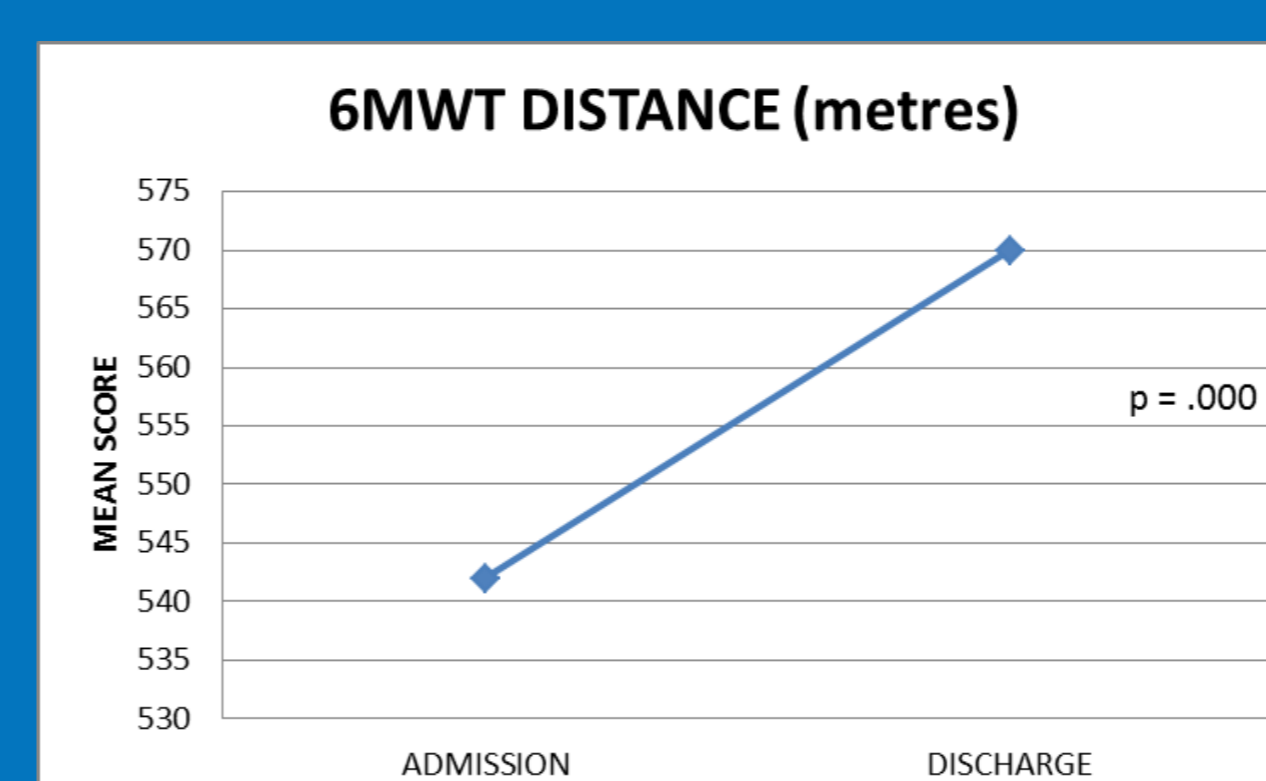
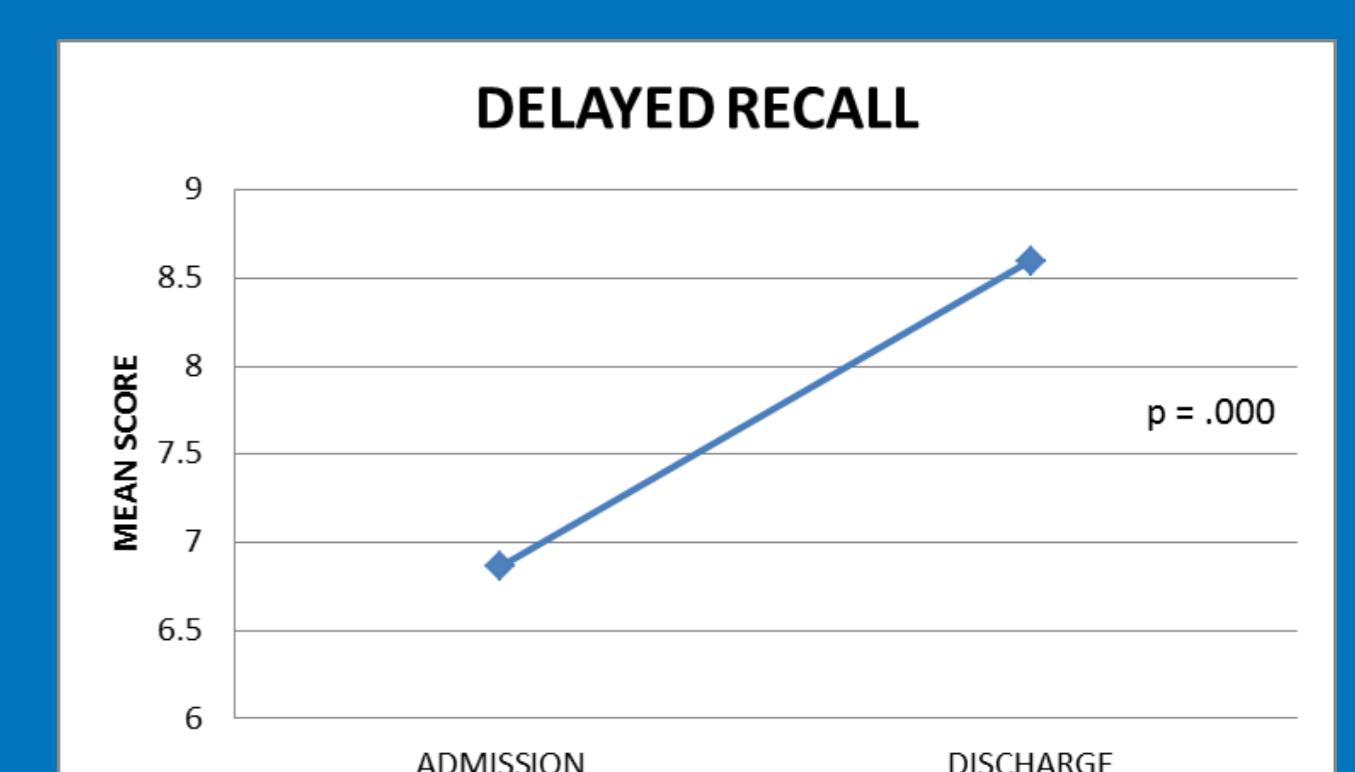
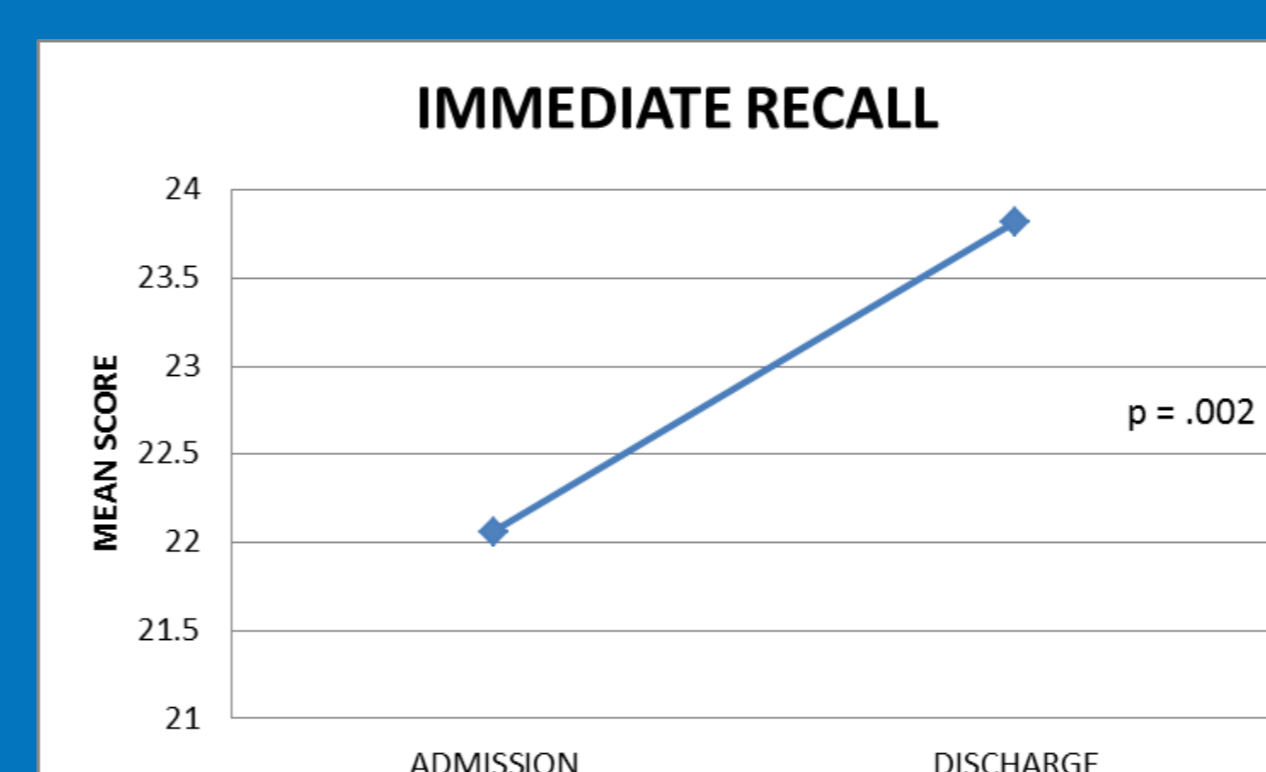
Method

- Cardiac Rehabilitation patients > 50 years, with coronary artery disease and no previous clinically diagnosed cognitive deficits, were recruited for the study.
- The CogState computerised cognitive assessment research battery was used to measure speed of information processing, working memory, immediate and delayed recall.
- In addition, exercise capacity (6 Minute Walk Test), weight, fat mass, waist circumference and anxiety and depression (Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale) were assessed on admission and discharge.



Findings

- Fifty participants - 84% male.
- Mean age \pm SD: 64.50 \pm 7.73 years.
- Significant improvements in immediate and delayed verbal recall were observed following the program.
- There was significant improvement in participants' 6 Minute Walk Test distance, weight, fat mass, and waist circumference.
- There was a non-significant improvement in levels of depression and anxiety.
- There was no correlation between changes in cognitive and physical measures, or with diagnosis (e.g. stent or myocardial infarct).



Conclusion

Our findings suggest that a shorter cardiac rehabilitation program of 6 weeks is sufficient to observe significant improvement in cognitive function in cardiac patients, in addition to cardiac fitness and body composition, including weight, waist and fat mass.