**Supplementary Text 1**

In the UK version of the PROTECT study participants are UK residents, English speakers, aged 50 years and over, with access to the internet, and no clinical diagnosis of dementia at the time of recruitment. The PROTECT study was publicized nationwide and among existing cohorts of older adults (<https://exetercrfnihr.org/about/exeter-10000/>; <https://www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>; <https://bdr.alzheimersresearchuk.org>). Participants provided their informed consent online through the PROTECT website. Ethical approval for the PROTECT study was obtained from the London Bridge NHS Research Ethics Committee and Health Research Authority (Ref:13/LO/1578). Ethical approval for the secondary data analysis was obtained by the Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology, University of Exeter (Ref:eCLESPsy000603v2.1).

On an annual basis PROTECT participants complete measures of health and lifestyle through an online platform. As part of the PROTECT assessment in January 2019 participants were invited to complete additional questionnaires specific to this study including the AARC-10 SF (Kaspar *et al.*, 2019) and an open-ended question asking them to write any additional information they wished to report in relation to their AARC. To be eligible for the current study analyses participants had to have completed both the AARC-10 SF and the additional open-ended question. Inviting participants to write comments in relation to their AARC makes it possible to explore their thoughts as these arise while answering the AARC-10 SF (Teal *et al.*, 2015), hence, we deemed these textual data related to AARC suitable for qualitative exploration. Among the 14,757 participants that took part in the PROTECT study in 2019, 609 participants answered the AARC open-ended question and hence were included in the current study.

Among the 14,757 participants that took part in the PROTECT study in 2019, 14,148 did not feel the need to add their thoughts in the open-ended question; these individuals were, therefore, excluded from the current study sample. Demographic characteristics are reported separately for the sample of individuals who answered the AARC open-ended question and the sample who did not answer the open-ended question to explore whether there are some specific characteristics about those people who answered the open-ended question. Analyses showed that participants who answered the open-ended question were slightly older, better-educated, and more likely to be women and not employed compared to those who did not answer the question (See Table 1).

**Supplementary Text 2**

Content analysis was a suitable method for this study as it can be applied to short written comments (Neuman, 2011). This approach made it possible to generate categories directly from the text (Hsieh, 2005) and to analyze data both qualitatively and quantitatively. To maximize the reliability of the identified categories (Elliott *et al.*, 1999), 10% of the responses (selected at random) were analyzed by a second researcher not otherwise involved in the study. For the 10% of responses analyzed by the two researchers, differences among researchers were discussed until agreement was reached. For the 10% of responses analyzed by the two researchers, Cohens’ Kappa statistic for the agreement between raters was .89; indicating acceptable agreement (Cohen, 1960). To demonstrate that the categories were generated from the data (Whittemore *et al.*, 2001), in the results section (under the section: comments associated with AARC judgments) descriptions of categories are integrated with relevant extracts.