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Email Bulletin – July 2006

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to send you the July email bulletin on our developments and plans for the Ageing Well Research Network. If you have items that you wish to be included in future bulletins please do not hesitate to forward them to us.

BARC Policy and Practice Colloquium - follow-up:

The Building Ageing Research Capacity (BARC) "Policy and Practice on Ageing: Informed by Evidence" Colloquium was held on 4 & 5 July 2006 in Canberra. The colloquium was attended by over 120 researchers, policymakers, care providers and representatives of other ageing constituencies. The first day focused on links between research and policy and included keynote addresses from Mr Andrew Podger and Professor Peter Saunders. Professors Helen Bartlett and Sue Richardson from the Network participated in a panel discussion entitled "Policy-relevant research and evidence-based policy: getting the alchemy right" and Professor Hal Kendig presented an overview of the Network objectives and directions and set the scene for Day 2 of the colloquium.

Day 2 focused on the Network and a discussion of possible future directions. Four workshops were held in the morning on research development and communication processes and a further four workshops were held in the afternoon relating to the Network Theme Areas. The workshops were well attended and generated vigorous discussion. Summaries of the workshops will be sent to participants and loaded on the Network website and participants will be invited to opt in to working groups to further develop the ideas discussed in the workshops. The directions identified in these discussions will be taken further in state and national meetings.

AWAP Announcements:

The Network welcomes the announcement of the six successful projects to be funded under the NHMRC and ARC's "Ageing Well, Ageing Productively" (AWAP) funding program which were announced at the BARC Colloquium. The Network facilitated three AWAP submissions and is very pleased to announce that one of these submissions, led by Associate Professor Kaarin Anstey at the Australian National University, was successful in being funded for \$2,000,000 over five years. The project entitled "Learning How To Age Well From Australian Longitudinal Studies of Ageing" will draw together data from nine Australian Longitudinal Studies of Ageing, including 53,484 participants, that will be used to identify factors capable of preventing disease, reducing ill-health, and promoting engaged and successful ageing for Australians.

The submission was an initiative of the Network's Population Research Strategies Research Theme Area and the Theme Convenor and Co-Convenor, Judith Healy and Heather Booth, are both investigators on the project along with Ann Harding and Laurie Brown from NATSEM, Julie Byles from the University of Newcastle, Mary Luszcz from Flinders University and Colette Browning from Monash University.

As well as being part of the above project, Mary Luszcz from Flinders University is one the investigators on "The development and evaluation of management strategies designed to address poly-morbidity in older people: Implications for health policy planning, practitioners and patients" project. This project aims to establish a methodology, by examination of two health databases, for developing guidelines to achieve the best possible outcomes for older Australians with common combinations of chronic conditions.

In addition, other Members of the Network are collaborators on another two successful teams. Professor John Piggott, a Participant in the Network at the University of New South Wales, is the Chief Investigator of the "Working Longer: Policy reforms and practice innovation" project which will forecast demographic and health transition in Australia and develop capacity to analyse the likely economic and workplace adjustments that population ageing will generate.

Professor Annette Dobson at the University of Queensland is the Chief Investigator of the "Predictors of Ageing Well in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health and the Perth Health in Men Study". Nancy Pachana, also a Network Participant at the University of Queensland, is one of the investigators on the project, which will capitalise on two existing large-scale studies, to increase our scientific understanding of strategies for maintaining the health and wellbeing of older people living in the community.

The details of the other successful projects are as follows:

University of NSW	<i>Gene-environment interaction in healthy brain ageing and age related neurodegeneration</i>
Charles Darwin University	<i>Examining a core assumption of policy and services for older Indigenous Australians</i>

Further details on the AWAP grants are available at www.nhmrc.gov.au/news/media/rel06/grants.pdf.

The Network would like to extend its congratulations to the investigators on each of these teams.

Theme Activities:

Healthy Ageing - The Healthy Ageing Research Theme sponsored speakers and symposia at recent ageing conferences and sponsored a visit by Professor Marcia Ory, Social and Behavioral Health at the School of Rural Public Health, Texas A&M University and Director, Active for Life National Program Office (www.activeforlife.info/default.aspx).

At the 19th Biennial meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) Conference held in Melbourne 2 - 6 July 2006 the Theme sponsored a number of activities. We contributed to the sponsorship of a keynote address by Professor Jacqui Smith, Professor of Psychology and Senior Research Scientist located at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin (www.mpib-berlin.mpg.de). The title of the address was 'Psychological vitality in old age: A new look at an old concept' and the session was chaired by Professor Mary Luszcz, co-convenor of the Healthy Ageing Research Theme. The Theme also sponsored the symposium 'Health, Behaviours and Ageing' convened by Professor Colette Browning and Professor Marcia Ory with Professor Mary Luszcz as discussant. Associate Professor Kaarin Anstey of the ACT Hub also gave a paper, as did a PhD student supervised by Kaarin and Mary Luszcz. The papers are listed below:

- Gender Differences on the Effect of Point of Reference in the Determinants of Self-Rated Health in Older Adults. (Sargent-Cox, K., Anstey, K., Luszcz, M.)
- An Investigation of the Better Cognitive Performance Observed Among Light and Moderate Alcohol Drinkers in Young, Middle and Late Adulthood: Results from the Path Through Life Study. (Anstey, K., Rodgers, B., Windsor, T.D.)
- Why We Need to Consider the Food Environment When Designing Interventions to Promote Healthy Eating in Older Adults. (Sharkey, J.R., Ory, M.)
- Diabetes Self-management in Older People: The Good Life Club. (Browning, C., Thomas, S., Kelly, J.)

The Theme sponsored a discussion hour at the ISSBD conference titled 'Policy and Practice Implications of Developmental Science for an Ageing Population' convened by Professors Browning and Luszcz and attended by international members of the Network, Professor Tony Antonucci, Professor Marcia Ory and Professor Jacqui Smith.

The Healthy Ageing Theme co-sponsored with COTA (Victoria) and the Alma Unit for Research in Ageing, Victoria University a symposium titled 'Social Change through Multigenerational Practice and Policy' in Melbourne on 30 June 2006. The symposium included an expert panel of international visitors to the recent conference sponsored by the International Consortium of Intergenerational Programmes (www.icip.cswebsites.org/default.aspx).

State Hub Activities:

ACT - As mentioned in the previous bulletin, the ACT Hub at the Australian National University (ANU) hosted a 5-day Longitudinal Methods workshop by Associate Professor Scott Hofer and Dr Lesa Hoffman from Pennsylvania State University which was jointly funded by the Network and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA). Scott and Lesa certainly gave the thirty participants a run for their money. Over the five days, workshop participants explored the intricacies of modelling change via longitudinal mixed linear modelling (LMLM) and Structural equation modelling (SEM) using SPSS and AMOS software.

In true Research Network fashion the workshop was well represented by a number of institutions across Australia currently involved in ageing research; including Monash University, The University of New Castle, The Department of Health (WA), La Trobe University, Canberra Hospital, University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, University of Canberra, FACSIA (ACT), and the Australian National University. The length and nature of the workshop facilitated networking between the workshop participants and the workshop presenters also discussed their interest in global networking between ageing researchers. In addition, Stephen Gray, archive manager of the ANU Australian Social Science Data Archive (ASSDA) gave a presentation on the last day of the workshop, promoting ageing research networking through the use of the archive. Both the ASSDA presentation and the workshop as a whole were well received by the participants. The workshop course evaluation survey revealed that overall, participants felt the workshop catered to their needs and stretched their knowledge base in longitudinal methods of modelling change.

Queensland – The Australasian Centre on Ageing holds a monthly colloquium for policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and others interested in ageing issues. The intention is to bridge the gap between research and policy / practice by inviting researchers to present the latest research evidence in their area. At the Colloquium in May 2006, Professor Duncan Boldy, the co-convenor of the Independent Living and Social Participation Network Theme, came from Perth to present his research, which involved working with a local council to involve seniors in planning and implementing health promoting strategies at the local level. His presentation was followed by brief responses from Dr Susan Dann of the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre and Dr Jeni Warburton of the Australasian Centre on Ageing. All three presenters stressed the importance of partnerships between researchers, governments and older people themselves in designing policy responses to ageing issues. Professor Boldy provided an interesting example of how this can be achieved at the local level. For further information about the colloquium series please visit <http://www.uq.edu.au/aca>.

South Australia - The SA Hub has been active in recent months and, in association with The Healthy Ageing Research Cluster (HARC), hosted a forum "Ageing Well in South Australia", on 21 March 2006, at the South Australian State Library. This meeting of researchers in the field of ageing was intended to share information about networking mechanisms and generate discussion on future ageing research in SA. In the longer term, the aim is to build local research capacity, generate new (or strengthen and extend existing) collaborations, and enhance the profile of ageing research in national and international arenas. The following presentations were given:

- Structure, Function and Opportunities of the Research Network in Ageing Well
Prof Mary Luszcz, SA State Node Convener, ARC/NHMRC Research Network in Ageing Well
- How the Research Network in Ageing Well Can Add Value
Prof Hal Kendig, National Convener, ARC/NHMRC Research Network in Ageing Well
- Agenda 2006
Prof Sue Richardson, Productivity and Economic Security Theme Convener, ARC/NHMRC Research Network in Ageing Well
- Growing the Capacity for Ageing Research in SA
Prof Gary Wittert, Co-Convenor, HARC

Fifty-two participants attended the forum, comprising academics and postgraduate students from both the social sciences and medical sciences, and representatives from organisations such as the Office of the Ageing, the Council on the Ageing (COTA) and the ACH Group (a private not for profit organisation specialising in aged care in South Australia).

In addition, the SA Hub in association with the Australian Psychological Society "Psychology & Ageing" Interest Group (SA Branch), hosted a workshop "Longitudinal Research from Middle- to Late-Adulthood: Methodological Considerations & Approaches for Examining Ageing-Related Changes", on 7 July 2006, at Flinders University. Associate Professor Scott Hofer and Dr Lesa Hoffmann from the Pennsylvania State University conducted the workshop.

Twenty-two participants, consisting of clinical psychologists, academics and postgraduate students attended the workshop. Overall informal feedback was positive. Many participants commented on Scott and Lesa's generosity in the sharing of resources, the usefulness of the examples used to illustrate technical points and how helpful the information was for future work that was planned. The workshop was an excellent vehicle for contributing to the development and training of emerging researchers and for building expertise.

Victoria – As mentioned in the previous bulletin, the Victorian Hub is hosting a forum titled 'Enabling Access and Independence - Translating Ageing Research Evidence to Practice and Policy' on 17 August 2006. The forum is a collaboration with the Victorian Departments of Human Services and Infrastructure, the Department of Victorian Communities, COTA (Victoria) and AAG (Victoria). Speakers include Amanda Tatham from the University of Melbourne speaking on the VicLANES project and its applicability to older people (www.kcwh.unimelb.edu.au/viclanes), Rachel Carlisle from the National Heart Foundation speaking on their Healthy by Design Project and Anne Harris from RACV speaking on transport for older people. Representatives from the government departments will give a presentation on what they need from researchers to inform policy and this will lead into workshops to discuss dissemination and translation of ageing research.

International Visitors:

The Network was pleased to contribute to the visit from the US by Dr Harry (Rick) Moody, Director of Academic Affairs at AARP and Senior Associate at the International Longevity Center. Rick gave the keynote address at the Connecting Intergenerational Communities through Creative Exchange Conference at Victoria University. Rick also collaborated with Dr Susan Dann from the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre regarding meetings with National Seniors and Ageing Well Network Members and the Consumer-led Research Workshop at the BARC Policy and Practice Colloquium.

The Network also contributed to the visit by Professor Marcia Ory from Social and Behavioral Health at the School of Rural Public Health, Texas A&M University. In addition to collaborating with the Healthy Ageing Theme outlined under Theme Activities above, Marcia contributed to the Dissemination and Translation of Ageing Research Workshop at the BARC Policy and Practice Colloquium.

New Appointments:

Professor Colette Browning, Convenor of the Victorian State Hub and the Healthy Ageing Research Theme has moved from La Trobe University and has taken up a new position as Professor of Healthy Ageing at the Monash Institute of Health Services Research at Monash University. The Healthy Ageing Theme and the Victorian State Hub will now be administered from Monash.

Professor Shane Thomas, a key member of the Services Research Group, has moved from the University of Sydney and has taken up a Research Chair within the School of Primary Health Care in the Faculty of Medicine at Monash University.

Finally, congratulations to Mair Underwood who plays a key role with the Emerging Researchers on Ageing (ERA) conferences and the Queensland State Hub. Mair has completed her PhD and has taken up a new position as Research Manager for the Australasian Centre on Ageing at the University of Queensland.

We wish each of the above well in their new roles.

NHMRC Funding opportunity – Palliative Care Round Three Research Program:

The third round of the Palliative Care Research Program provides over \$4.3 million over 4 years to fund research and activities that will develop capacity within the palliative care research community. As part of this Program, the NHMRC has called for Expressions of Interest for Priority-Driven Research Grants with a total funding of up to \$1.8 million available for grants of up to three years duration. A maximum of \$300,000 will be provided for individual grants.

The closing date for Expressions of Interest is 5pm AEST on 6 September 2006. For more information see <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/types/granttype/strategic/palliative.htm>.

Postgraduate Student Scholarship Opportunity – University of Queensland:

An exciting Australian Postgraduate Award Industry (APAI) scholarship opportunity currently exists within The University of Queensland Assets & Ageing Research Program. The APAI scholarship forms part of a newly funded ARC Linkage Project aimed at understanding the intersection of social, legal and financial factors from an assets and ageing perspective. The Chief Investigators of the project include Network Participants Associate Professor Jill Wilson and Professor Linda Rosenman.

As the PhD candidate attached to the program's ARC Linkage Project, you will be assisted in the development of a project. The project of your choosing is expected to fall within the ambit of asset management in residential care facilities and to contribute to the broader research objectives of the Assets and Ageing Research Program.

You should possess relevant qualifications in any one or more of a range of disciplines, including social work, social science, psychology, business or law, and be eligible for entry to the PhD program. The potential candidate is expected to have an interest in the social and economic dimensions of the ageing process. It is not expected that you will necessarily have previous research experience in this area.

This is a three year full-time APAI scholarship commencing in 2006/7. The tax-free stipend is \$24,650 per annum. Under the conditions of the APAI funding, the scholarship holder must be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, or New Zealand citizen.

For further information, please contact the Research Co-ordinator, Ms Anne-Louise McCawley on (07) 3365 2113 or a.mccawley@social.uq.edu.au or see <http://www.uq.edu.au/swahs>. Applications should be sent to Ms Anne-Louise McCawley, Assets & Ageing Research Program, School of Social Work & Applied Human Sciences, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Qld, 4072. The closing date for applications is Friday 4 August 2006.

Position Vacant - Postdoctoral/Research Fellow – Ageing and Health – The University of Sydney:

This is an exceptional opportunity to build a career with some of Australia's foremost researchers on ageing. Your work will focus on applied, multi-disciplinary research into ageing and health – a National Research Priority goal – the results of which will contribute to policy development for an ageing Australia.

You will be responsible for analysing survey data; preparing proposals for external funding research and liaising research both collaborators and service providers. Your accountability will extend to overseeing fieldwork and research support, as well as preparing literature reviews and research publications.

Experienced with survey research, self motivated and proactive, you will have the demonstrated capacity to work independently on a collaborative research project whilst under the guidance of senior collaborators. Your core research capabilities will be complemented by strong analytical abilities including skills with multivariate statistics and the capacity to produce quality publications. Experience with longitudinal research would be an advantage.

Whether you are an established researcher, or have recently completed your PhD in a health or social science discipline, this position offers you the chance to participate in leading edge research that benefits the community. This position is part of a research team led by Professor Hal Kendig at the University of Sydney's Cumberland campus, located in Lidcombe.

For more information, please call Carol Farnsworth on (02) 9036 7297. Applications must be submitted online at <http://positions.usyd.edu.au> (search for Position Reference USYD/C26/79434). The closing date for applications is Friday 4 August 2006.

STOP PRESS - Collaboration for Ageing & Aged-care Informatics Research Symposium:

The Collaboration for Ageing & Aged-care Informatics Research (CAAIR), led by Associate Professor Jeffrey Soar, is holding a one-day symposium on "The Future of Ageing and Aged-care Enabled by Innovation, Technology, Management and Education" from 9:00am to 4:00pm **today Thursday 20 July 2006** at the University of Southern Queensland, West St, Toowoomba, Queensland.

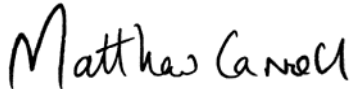
The full program and further details of the Symposium are available at <http://www.usq.edu.au/business/research/conferences/aging/default.htm>. You are welcome to attend the full day or part thereof - for catering purposes, please RSVP to Karen van Staden (email vanstadc@usq.edu.au).

Reminders:

International Conference on Healthy Ageing & Longevity	13-15 October '06	www.longevity-international.com
The Australian Falls Prevention Conference	5-7 November '06	www.powmri.edu.au/AFP2006
Emerging Researchers in Ageing (ERA) Conference	21 November '06	www.chs.usyd.edu.au/era2006
Australian Association of Gerontology Conference	22-24 November '06	www.aagconference2006.com

That's all for this month.

With best wishes,



Matthew Carroll
Senior Project Officer

20 July 2006