

**ARC-NHMRC 'AGEING WELL' RESEARCH NETWORK- WA STATE HUB
AND
WA DIVISION OF AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF GERONTOLOGY
BRIEF REPORT ON 'SYMPOSIUM ON AGEING RESEARCH'**

**Thursday 29th and Friday 30th September 2005
City West Function Centre
West Perth**

1. **Broad Aim of State Hubs:** to facilitate information exchange and collaborative research proposal development at a State level.
2. **Symposium Aim:** to identify opportunities for new and imaginative research connections – specifically to:
 - a. Facilitate ways in which existing research could be enhanced
 - b. Identify areas of ageing research not/ inadequately covered
 - c. Discuss disciplines not/inadequately represented.

3. **Symposium Committee:**

Chairperson: Prof Duncan Boldy – Curtin University

Members: Prof Alan Bittles – Edith Cowan University
Dr Janine Calver – Data Linkage Unit, WA Health Department
Prof Leon Flicker – University of Western Australia
Dr Barbara Horner – Curtin University
Dr Gill Lewin – Silver Chain Nursing Association
Dr Chris Toye – President, WA Div of AAG/ECU

Secretary: Ms Mary Carey – Curtin University.

4. Invitations to register their interest in the Network and volunteer a short paper, were sent to all academics at each of the five Perth/Fremantle universities (and a number of independent research groups), mentioning that this invitation also extended to their research students. The four Network thematic areas (Productivity and Economic Security; Independent Living and Social Participation; Healthy Ageing; and Population Research Strategies) were indicated and it was stressed that 'ageing research' was to be interpreted broadly, in terms of both scope and disciplines.
5. A total of 36 short presentations (max of 8 minutes/6 slides) were given, broadly categorised as follows:

Independence & Social Participation (12)

1.Maintaining independence (2)

2.Relationships (3)

- 3.Ageism (1)
- 4.Physical environment (1)
- 5.Technology (2)
- 6.Services (3)
- Healthy Ageing (13)
 - 1.Physical health (3)
 - 2.Mental health (4)
 - 3.Physical & social activity (3)
 - 4.Other health promotion (3)
- Productivity & Economic Security (6)
 - 1.Productivity (3)
 - 2.Economic security (3)
- Brief additions (5)

Specific presentation titles and slide presentation themselves, are available via the CRACS website (or will be soon).

- 6. In addition, Prof Hal Kendig (Uni of Sydney and National Convenor of the 'Ageing Well' Network) presented an overview of the Network, and Prof Helen Bartlett (Uni of Queensland and Network Theme Convenor) presented information about the Emerging Researchers in Ageing (ERA) activities.
- 7. Considerable time was allowed for discussion, reporting back and networking.
- 8. **Symposium Evaluation:** 27 evaluation forms were returned, out of a possible total (omitting keynote presenters and CRACS staff) of 50.
 - a. 100% indicated that the symposium had been a useful network opportunity; 84% had plans to make contact with participants
 - b. 57% identified themselves as 'new researchers' and 43% as 'established researchers'
 - c. 82% indicated much or very much to 'facilitated ways in which existing research could be enhanced'
 - d. 85% indicated much or very much to 'identified areas of ageing research not or inadequately covered'
 - e. 64% indicated much or very much to 'discussed disciplines not or inadequately represented'
 - f. a variety of comments and suggestions were made as to additional aspects which might contribute further to the achievement of the three aims (see item 2 above).
- 9. **Follow-up Symposium?:** Taking into account the information provided via the evaluation and their own assessment of 'what next', the Symposium Committee have provisionally agreed to organise a follow-up symposium, provisional 'characteristics' being as follows:

- a. Fewer 'bigger' multi-disciplinary topics, with a particular focus on research methods, but still covering a broad range (ideas/ suggestions to be canvassed and/or commented on via email database of interested researchers in WA);
- b. Date(s) to be agreed – sometime next year.

Professor Duncan Boldy
WA State Hub Convenor
ARC-NHMRC 'Ageing Well' Research Network
Centre for Research into Aged Care Services
Curtin University of Technology

4 November 2005