



AUSTRALIAN
ASSOCIATION OF GERONTOLOGY



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Welcome to the Third Edition of the AAG E-Newsletter!

In this edition, our successful 2007 R.M. Gibson Grant recipients describe their research projects – Candice Patterson ('A randomised controlled trial of Silver Chain's Social Enablement Program'), Andrea Petriwskyj ('Governance in the Grey Area: Engaging Australia's Seniors at the local level') and Ruth Walker ('Social origins of sleep disturbance among community-dweller older women') outline the aims and objectives of their research. The AAG also says farewell to Arthur Baxter, one of the associations founding members.

In terms of international activities, the AAG is writing a review of the United Nations International Action Plan on Ageing (the Madrid Protocol). Members are encouraged to share their experiences and comments about the role of international linkages in Australian ageing research to the Executive Officer as soon as possible. In addition, the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) have established a virtual 'Hall of Great Names', which will be a place for the Gerontological and Geriatric professional community to recognise individuals who have made outstanding contribution to the field. AAG has been asked to nominate up to five professionals they believe are worthy of this honour – we ask that AAG members contact and discuss their suggestions with their State President as soon as possible, as internal nominations close mid-March. The application criteria and process is outlined later in this newsletter.

The Perth division are busy organising our next national conference, 'Ageing Landscapes', which is in Fremantle from 19-21 November this year. As the deadline for abstract submissions is early May, please don't forget to visit <http://www.aagconference.com/> to download a copy of the call for papers and submit your proposal. For further details on other upcoming forums, events and conferences, please see the upcoming events section of the newsletter.



National Activities

Request for Member Feedback on Madrid Protocol

The AAG is involved in submitting a review of the United Nations International Action Plan on Ageing (the Madrid Protocol) to the Office for an Ageing Australia (OFAA). The International Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st Century links to the Priority directions of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002.

A 2007 update to the Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st Century has recently been released – information can be found on the following websites: www.un.org/ageing/ and www.iagg.com.br/webforms/iaggNewsletter.aspx. For this review, we need to know how you currently participate in international research linkages, as well as your recommendations about how best to build international collaborations. We would appreciate it if you could answer the following five questions by mid-March, and provide us with your thoughts on the Madrid Protocol. We thank you in advance for participating, as your feedback will shape the focus of the report. Please email your responses to AAG Executive Officer, Karen Robinson, by Friday 28th March: eoag@ag.asn.au

1. First, please describe your awareness and use of the Madrid Protocol, and whether it impacts on your research activities.
2. Please list and describe any international research linkages or partnerships your research centre/institute is currently involved in (i.e, joint research projects, visiting fellowships, partnerships with overseas universities etc)
3. How could your research centre/institute be better supported to build international research linkages? Please list your ideas and recommendations.
4. In particular, we would like to know how your research centre supports Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in ageing. Please list and describe any internal initiatives, as well as national or international linkages your centre is involved in that specifically involves ECRs (i.e., internal support mechanisms, annual funding for conferences/networking/fellowships etc).
5. In your opinion, how could ECRs in ageing be better supported to develop international linkages?

Finally, please list any other comments you have about the role of international linkages in ageing research in Australia.

Thank you in advance- we look forward to integrating your feedback into our report.

International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics - 'Hall of Great Names'

The International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG) have established a virtual '**Hall of Great Names**', which will be a place for the Gerontological and Geriatric professional community to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contribution to the field in the areas of Research, Public Policy and Advocacy, Teaching or Service to the Development of Geriatrics and Gerontology by translating research findings to practice.

- Research - What was the contribution to research and why is the contribution significant?
- Public Policy and Advocacy - What was the contribution to the development of public policy or what specific contributions the nominee has made to advocacy on behalf of older adults?
- Teaching - What was the contribution of the nominee to the teaching of Gerontology or Geriatrics and why is the contribution significant?



- Translation of research to practice - What was the specific contribution to practice? What is the impact of this work on the lives of older people?

The first people to be honored at the Hall were Prof. Gary Andrews and Prof. Paul B. Baltes. Each IAGG member society has now been asked to nominate up to five professionals they believe are worthy of this honour. By doing this, you will acknowledge all those people who made a difference in Gerontology and Geriatrics in your country, and let the whole world know about them and their accomplishments. The deadline for submissions to the IAGG is April 30th; thus, we need your nominations this month. We ask that AAG members discuss their suggestions with their State President as soon as possible, as our internal nomination process will close mid-March. The application process involves answering the following five questions, as well as providing a CV.

1. What was the nature of the contribution and why is the contribution significant?
2. What is the impact of the nominee's work for the field of Gerontology or Geriatrics?
3. What is the impact on the nominee's contribution on the lives of older people?
4. How is the work disseminated in the international community?
5. How has the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics benefited from the nominee's work?

AAG Student Committee - Academic Advisor

The AAG is seeking expressions of interest from members willing to be Academic advisor to the AAG Student Committee. The Student Committee is an official sub-committee of the National AAG Council. The Academic Advisor to the AAG Student Committee will have primary responsibility for overseeing the coordination, support and mentoring the Student Committee activities. In addition, the Academic Advisor, working closely with the AAG Executive Committee, AAG Executive Officer and AAG National Council will assist the AAG Student Committee in the development of an annual action plan for activities and programs.

The Academic Advisor will have a role in the coordination of communication among the State Student Representatives using such mechanisms as e-mail, the AAG members only website and AAG State and National meetings. The Academic Advisor is expected to attend the AAG Council meetings. The advisor will also be a link (with the National student President) between the students and the Council.

The position of Academic Advisor to the AAG Student Committee is for a term of three years, commencing 1 July 2008 and concluding 30 June, 2011. Listed below are the criteria for selection of Academic Advisor to the AAG Student Committee.

- an active AAG member;
- hold an academic position at a recognised Australian university;
- an interest in participating in AAG state and national activities;
- enthusiasm and a track record in working with students;
- time and resources available to commit to this important Committee.

Application and Selection Process:

Send your expression of interest to the Executive Officer Karen Robinson. Applications will be sent to those members who have lodged an expression of interest and also made available on the AAG members only section of the website. All applications are to be sent to the Executive Officer by 11 April 2008. Applicants may be asked to attend an interview (probably teleconference) if required. The applications will be assessed by a panel of five AAG representatives (AAG President, AAG Student President, 1 AAG Executive Committee, 1 student representative and the Executive Officer). The successful application will be ratified at the May Council meeting in Brisbane in 2008 and will be notified by the National President.



State Activities

ACT Division

At its January committee meeting, the ACT branch decided on the events to be held in 2008. These will culminate in the annual breakfast in the first week of December, with others to take place in February, May and August as well as another student symposium anticipated later in the year. The first gathering is a feedback session on the Beijing Conference scheduled for Tuesday 26 February at the Canberra Hospital featuring Dr Seeva and Helen Shephard of the Canberra Hospital and Jill Miller. They chose to speak about day care centres in Beijing, exercise programs in East Asia and long-term care insurance in East Asia among other things.

Planning is underway for the national conference to be held in Canberra in 2009.

Forthcoming Events

28 May, 16.00–17.30

Ann Peut is to talk about the 4th edition of *Older Australia at a glance*, published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare where Ann is head of the Ageing and aged care unit.

Jill Miller - Newsletter rep

NSW Division/Hunter Chapter

'Getting On With Life, Rehabilitation and Chronic Illness in Old Age'

AAG NSW is holding it's Regional Conference in Wollongong on the 1-2 April, 2008.

The theme for the 2008 conference is 'Getting on with life' and will celebrate older people and the research, programs and people who find creative ways to thrive with chronic or disabling conditions. Topics will cover areas such as living in Rehabilitation settings, self-management, dealing with illness and medication and ways for improving mental and physical health.

The conference will showcase some of the many research projects, practice innovations and support programs which encourage and enable people to overcome the physical, psychological and social problems they encounter in living with or caring for someone with these conditions.

Outstanding speakers and helpful workshops will ensure a rewarding two days. So if you haven't booked, make sure you don't miss out.

For details please access the brochure on the home page of AAG webpage: www.aag.asn.au

Felicity Barr - President, NSW Division

Queensland Division

On the 16th of February, our Queensland Branch was invited to attend the ACFI information update session for Allied Health Professionals in conjunction with QLD gerontology Physiotherapy Australia and the Department of Health and Ageing at the APA house. The session was well attended; we were delighted to have Victoria Boyd, Assistant Director, Funding Implementation Team, Policy and Evaluation Branch, Department of Health and Ageing Canberra to present for our session. Members and other allied professionals asked questions regarding their concerns first hand and discussed professional strategies to



ensure allied health continue to be part of RACFs. For members, who would like to receive the ACFI user guide or feedback re ACFI, please contact me on s.fu@uq.edu.au.

May 24th Seminar

Our upcoming event is a seminar on **Quality of Life** for older Australians across different settings on the 24th May, 0930-1230 at RSL Care 301 Wickham Street Valley. Speakers include Professor Wendy Moyle, Griffith University, Dr Richard Kidd, Brisbane North GP Division, Mr Mark Tucker Evans, QCOTA; and Dr Nancye Peel from Australasian Centre on Ageing.

Cost – free for AAG members, \$10 for non members.

Please RSVP to deborahoxlad@rslcare.com.au as soon as possible as places are limited.

Upcoming Events

DATE & TIME	EVENT	LOCATION & INFO
July	State Fall's prevention forum	TBC
Wednesday, 27th August 6pm to 8pm - <i>includes light snacks & drinks</i>	AGM Venue: Function Room (upstairs), Ship Inn, SouthBank http://www.theshipinn.com.au/ (corner of Sidon & Stanley Street, Southern end of the Goodwill Bridge)	Speaker: Colleen Geyer Director of Mission, Blue Care Cost: Free for AAG members
November	Travelling Fellow 2008 Visiting Fellow, Professor William Mann Date: TBC - mid-November Time: TBC Venue: TBC	From the University of Florida, Prof Mann will speak about the ' Intersection of Engineering, Rehabilitation and Social Sciences '.

Student Activities

The student section is also very active this year, they had a great turnout for their welcoming dinner and towards the middle of the year, a student seminar session has been planned to give students practical tips with presentation skills for upcoming conferences and oral vivas.

Deborah Oxlade - Newsletter Editor

Victorian Division

Student Members

As part of our drive to recruit new student members, the Division are offering free memberships to students in 2008 and providing a subsidised membership for those qualifying as ERA members. A number of events have already been planned for our student members, in conjunction with the Australian Psychology Society (APS) Special Interest Group. More details can be obtained from the Secretariat.

The 2011 Asia/Oceanic Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics

Planning for this event is well underway. The Regional Congress sub-committee met with Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVB) representatives in December last year and further meetings with national and regional AAG/IAAG representatives have already taken place.



Forums and Seminars

February's Forum provided perspectives on physical activity in older people. Helen Corbett from Bundoora Extended Care Centre reported on focus groups with sedentary older people from rural CALD communities and their feedback on why they weren't physically active. Jane Sims, from Monash University's Healthy Ageing Research Unit, gave an overview of the physical activity recommendations for older Australians. In 2005, the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) was commissioned by the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) to provide a review of the evidence and to develop physical activity recommendations for older people. (The Recommendations are in the process of seeking approval from the Australian Health Ministers Council. The Recommendations have been endorsed to seek Health Ministers' approval by the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council). Copies of these presentations will be available on the Division's section of the AAG website shortly. <http://www.aag.asn.au/vic.php>

Forthcoming Events

Friday April 11th

9.30-3.30

Speakers:

Registration Fee:

Creating environments for positive ageing

Treasury Theatre

J Bruce, MAV; D de Jonge, AHURI; N Gately, VicUrban; R McClure, MUARC; K Moore, NARI; A Starr, ANUHD; B Sutherland, Consultant; M Walker, Department of Planning & Community Development, Victoria; C Williams, Independent Living Centre, Victoria.

\$50 for AAG members

\$75 for non-members

\$35 for students/concession

Wednesday April 16th

6-7 pm

Speaker:

Active service models in home and community care

St George's Kew

Meg Henderson, Department of Human Services, Aged Care Branch

Wednesday 18th June

6-7 pm

Speaker:

Beyond Maturity Blues

St George's Kew

Nick Tolhurst, beyondblue

For more details contact the State Secretariat: Sue Hunt 8387 2614, email s.hunt@nari.unimelb.edu.au

Dr Jane Sims, Secretary, Victorian Division

SA/NT Division

Gathering strength again after the exhilarating but demanding preparation for the National Conference in November 2007, the SA/NT Committee is putting together an exciting seminar series to be held from June to November this year. This will include presentations on the topics of:

- Contemporary approaches to managing pain for older people (residential and community care). This event will be presented in partnership with Geriaction SA.
- Horticultural Therapy for older people
- The use of adaptive electronic technologies and easy to use computer systems for older people in residential care and therapy situations, outlining the "Its Never 2 Late" application and its first Australian pilot site. (to be confirmed)

Further details will be posted on the website soon.

Cathy Lock, President, SA/NT Division



Western Australian Division

The appointment of Jason Fox as student representative promises exciting times for students and emerging researchers in AAG activities in WA. After initiating interest in AAG with the student population at some of WA's Universities, Julie Borninkhof hands over the role of student representative to Jason, having met him at Adelaide Conference in 2007.

Julie is currently completing her Doctor of Psychology (Clinical) at Murdoch University, in collaboration with the Centre of Research Ageing, Curtin University of Technology. She is researching in the area of enhancing the psychological well-being of aged care workers through the development of self-care practices. Julie is passionate about improving the care received within aged care settings.

Having been a student member of the AAG since 2005, she is now the WA AAG secretary, the WA National Representative, and the outgoing WA student representative.

Within her work-role Julie is the Mental Health Program Manager and a Psychologist with the Rockingham Kwinana Division of General Practice. She is passionate about delivering quality mental health services to the community in both a management and psychotherapeutic capacity. Interests include working with individuals, couples, and families to address depression, grief, anxiety, personality issues, self-harm and suicide.



Julie Borninkhof

Jason is currently entering his third year of PhD research, exploring effective health promotion strategies for older adults and developing a healthy ageing motivation program. After meeting many of the delegates at last year's national AAG conference, Jason is looking forward to working with students and emerging researchers in WA to make this year an unforgettable one! One of his priorities this year is to promote the AAG and research in ageing as not only important, but thoroughly exciting.

Jason has programmed a casual networking opportunity for Emerging Researchers and students and says

All students and emerging researchers are invited to the Boat Shed in South Perth (Coode St Jetty) at 10.00 am on Saturday March 1st to savour the fine company of your peers. The WA AAG Division is sponsoring this networking opportunity which will be a great way for student and emerging researchers in WA to link up with each other. The recent national AAG conference generated a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the student delegates, and this will be a great chance to maintain that momentum. With the national AAG conference being hosted in Fremantle this year, there has never been a better time for WA students and emerging researchers to be involved in the AAG! Please feel free to invite anyone you know who is involved in ageing research or is interested in meeting fellow ageing researchers. We are a very warm and welcoming bunch and we look forward to joining you over brunch. If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact your state student representative

Jason Fox deepestgreen@mad.com

Student Awards At the close of 2007 two year's membership of AAG and Book Vouchers were presented to University students, Jodie Atkinson (Edith Cowan University) and Jodie Kossen (Notre Dame University) for excellence in Ageing Studies.

What's On

March 1st. 10.00am

Brunch for students and emerging researchers, at the Boat Shed Restaurant (Coode Street Jetty) South Perth. Free - Sponsored by WA Division AAG. Contact: Jason Fox deepestgreen@mac.com

Ron Okely, Newsletter Rep. WA Division



Student Space

Student Space this edition discusses an AAG award to recognise the outstanding service of Viv Allanson and, in memory, re-prints a 2004 interview with Arthur Baxter.

AAG Award to Recognise Outstanding Service

It was just after the University of Newcastle (NSW) went on Christmas break that I was invited to attend a morning tea in honour of Viv Allanson, who is the CEO of Maroba, an aged care facility here in Newcastle NSW. Always up for a bit of cake and a chat, I headed off on Wednesday 19th December 2007 with camera in hand to meet with, and get some photos of, the Maroba team who regularly support, attend and host AAG meetings.

Named after the first two letters in each of the words of the owners (Maitland Road Baptist), Maroba was started in the early 1950s and has grown steadily since, with an ever-increasing waiting list. There are 23 self-care units, a 53-bed 'village' residence and 79 nursing home beds, with additional facilities such as an arts and crafts room, chapel, community centre, dining rooms, hair dressers, computer and internet access, library, outdoor barbecue area, lounge areas, indoor spa and village bus to name a few.

Viv became CEO of Maroba in 2000, even though apparently she suggested that the Board '... find someone that could add up, because I can't add up and I can't spell.' Yet, somehow despite this, Viv continues to exemplify the AAG's objectives through her leadership in the aged care sector by following best practice in her organisation, encouraging her colleagues in her own and other organisations to participate in research, and by adopting a multi-disciplinary, whole-person approach to working with older people. Under Viv's direction, Maroba has taken part in pain management research, falls prevention programs and a Baroque music study – all of which Viv embraces as an opportunity to learn more, saying 'I love those sorts of research outcomes, because they're the things that really challenge practice.' Viv was also President for the AAG NSW Hunter Chapter from August 2005 to August 2007.

Viv's passion about aged care is obvious, and she has never rested on her laurels in terms of the good reputation that Maroba enjoys, never claiming to be excellent, as some other organisations might, simply claiming to do the best they can. Says Viv about Maroba '...I believe in its people, in its strategy, its future focus, the way the organisation is going.... it is growing in bricks and mortar, but that's not where I see our primary growth, it's more in people, growing people.'

Congratulations Viv, for your outstanding service to the AAG over many years.

Notes:

1. Thank you to Felicity Barr for AAG award information.
2. Maroba link: <http://users.hunterlink.net.au/~mbbva/about.html>
3. Pain management study contact: Dr Isabel Higgins, Division of Medicine, Center for Practice Opportunity and Development, John Hunter Hospital, Hunter New England Health, e-mail: Isabel.Higgins@newcastle.edu.au



(L-R) Felicity Barr, President, NSW Division AAG; Professor Julie Byles, Director, Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing; Viv Allanson, CEO Maroba; Meredith Tavener, NSW Hunter Chapter Student Rep AAG.

Photo by Helen MacDonald



4. Falls prevention link: <http://livesite.newcastle.edu.au/gha>

5. Music study reference: 'Effects of ambient baroque music on patients with dementia', *Australasian Journal on Ageing* , Vol. 22, no. 4 December 2003, p. 211

Meredith Tavener
AAG NSW Hunter Chapter Student Representative

In Memory: Special Interview with Arthur Baxter

Ms Taylor Dong, Executive Committee Member of the AAG, interviewed Arthur when he was 83 for the Newsletter in 2004 regarding his student days

1. What was it like when you were a student?

Very long hours in study, whilst an Administrator of a country public hospital.

2. When did you realise that you wanted to work with the aged and ageing?

Watching aged and geriatric patients accommodated in an enclosed veranda, been given Larrgactrol, which made them appear like zombies and knowing that there must be something better for the care of the aged.

3. How did your educational training help you to find work in the field of gerontology?

Trained as an accountant, being interested in the aged, which enabled me to seek a position as a hospital administrator.

4. Why would you recommend a degree in gerontology to future students?

To enable you to understand and appreciate the care of the aged, you first must have a degree in Gerontology to enable you to fulfill your qualifications. Remember, if you live long enough, you will become one of those aged needing care.

5. What is one of your favourite quotes or sayings?

I see an increased need for a better Geriatric Service for the aged, with a complete Total Care Concept, within or without the Geriatric Hospital.

The aged must watch their diet, don't smoke and exercise regularly. This will allow them to grow old gracefully, retain their dignity, and live independently at home for a longer period.

Ms Taylor Dong
NSW Executive Committee Member





Get Involved With Seniors Celebrations 2008



The NSW Seniors Week celebrations are held over 6th to 13th April this year. It's always a great time, lots of things going on around the town of Newcastle where I live, as well as throughout NSW.

Seniors Week or Month is a special time of celebrations for seniors, and people of all ages, in all States and Territories. This is a perfect time to recognise the valuable contribution seniors all over Australia make to our community.

I'll certainly be involved in some bits and pieces where I work, and I'd like to ask that each of you keep an eye out for Seniors Celebrations in your State, and go along so that you can then write about it for the Student Space Newsletter.



The dates are different between States – which is great as we can continue to read about what's been going on during most of 2008. The diversity in events can be just incredible, ranging from concerts, movies, cooking and gardening demonstrations, computing lessons and general information seminars.

A good place to start is

<http://www.seniors.gov.au/internet/seniors/publishing.nsf/Content/Seniors+Week+2008>

So, don't just sit there... get involved !!



Gerontology News

Bereavement Notice

The AAG says farewell to Arthur Baxter, one of the associations founding members. Arthur Baxter has recently died at the grand age of 86. He was a well known and well respected long standing member of the Australian Association of Gerontology of NSW. His life and career were busy, rewarding and inspiring to many.

He joined the AAG in the late 1960's and was Secretary/Treasurer for 4 years and President for 3 years. He was the first NSW member to receive an AAG Fellowship. The pinnacle of Arthur's career in hospital administration was his appointment as Chief Executive Officer of the Governor Philip Special Hospital Penrith, and Advisor to the Health Commission of NSW where he was able to develop his interest in the care of the elderly. Arthur was one of the first 'non-health' professionals who saw it was important to join the AAG as an administrator. That was a very unusual position for anyone to take who was not involved in direct patient care, but was very much involved in the way services were provided.



Arthur Baxter
F.A.I.M. L.M.R.S.H.

Arthur continued his leadership in the field of gerontology in retirement. As a WWII veteran living on the Central Coast, he was influential in encouraging the improvement of aged care services to veterans. Arthur became the inaugural (and only) President of the Veterans and War Widows Advisory Committee on Aged Care for the Central Coast and provided input to the development of the Central Coast Quality Ageing Strategy. Never one to let others do all the work, Arthur also undertook training as a peer educator and gave talks to veteran groups about men's health and ageing issues.

Member Tribute to Arthur Baxter

Ruth Bright, Music Therapist and a long standing member of the AAG remembers:

I worked with Arthur on the Committee of the NSW branch of the AAG for several years, and he was tremendously supportive to me during my Presidency of that branch - and to everyone else too, at all times. But it was not only in the NSW branch of the AAG that Arthur made contributions - he was also a keep member of the organisation which preceded the AAG, The Gerontological Society of NSW. I have clear memories of his help when we had a series of public seminars, some of which took place at Macquarie University.

By his own efforts at self-education, Arthur achieved a high-status position as CEO of the Governor Phillip Hospital at Penrith. When he had innovative ideas - and there were many such - he did his utmost to put them into effect.

On one of my visits there for music therapy, for example, he showed me some rooms set up with ordinary furniture and decoration, to create a half-way living situation for people who had been ill for a long time and who had become almost too accustomed to the clinical milieu. And this was many years ago, when there was little recognition of the culture-shock associated with (a) coming into hospital and (b) going home again!

In those rooms, people were helped to re-learn how to make their beds, put away their clothes etc - all of which sounds easy, but can be hard if you have been in care for a long period.

Arthur was, as we all know, keen to present his ideas to the AAG membership as a whole, and his many



and varied papers will be remembered by all who heard them.

The AAG will be different without him!"

Some of his memorable papers were:

- Veterans Helping Veterans: A NSW Example - The effects of a Wartime Experience on Health Australian, Journal on Ageing Vol 14 No 3
- Options in Community and Institutional Care
- Day hospitals & Day Centres - their Role and Function.
- The Quality of Life in the Elderly
- Sex and the Ageing.

And the final words go to Arthur himself. Ms Sharon Wall, AAG member, recently sent Arthur a card after he was admitted into hospital. She received a thank you card from Arthur with the words:

'I may have the big C but still have fond memories through AAG which still remain' and of course, we now hold onto fond memories of Arthur.

Contribution – NSW Division



NSW Executive Committee Members



Arthur Baxter, Prof Gary Andrews, Prof Arthur Everitt
AAG National Conference 2003

R.M. Gibson Recipients

The three successful 2007 R.M. Gibson Grant recipients – Candice Patterson ('A randomised controlled trial of Silver Chain's Social Enablement Program'), Andrea Petriwskyj ('Governance in the Grey Area: Engaging Australia's Seniors at the local level') and Ruth Walker ('Social origins of sleep disturbance among community-dweller older women') - describe their research projects. As the closing date for the 2008 funding round is June 30, so we encourage all emerging researchers in ageing to consider applying. Further information, including the application criteria and form, is available on the AAG website or from the Secretariat.



A Randomised Controlled Trial of Silver Chain's Social Enablement Program

Background

Feelings of social isolation, loneliness and depression are frequently reported within the older home-care population. A study of older people referring for home-care services at Silver Chain found that 61.7% screened positive for depression. The study also found that this was strongly associated with frequent feelings of loneliness (Lewin & Calver 2006). The need for programs to alleviate both loneliness and depression in the home-care population at large, and within Silver Chain in particular was thus indicated.

Reviews of programs to prevent or alleviate social isolation and loneliness have generally included quantitative studies with poorly designed evaluations that indicate there is inconclusive evidence as to the effectiveness of the intervention, and few have specifically targeted the older home-care population (Andersson, 1998; Findlay, 2003; Cattan, White, Bond & Learmouth, 2005). However, a qualitative evaluation of a Social Rehabilitation program piloted by Age Concern UK has shown they were successful in assisting many older people to participate more fully in the life of their choosing (Age Concern UK, 2003). Based on the above-mentioned Silver Chain study results and the success of the Age Concern UK model, an application for funding was made to the Silver Chain Foundation for an 18 month trial of a Social Rehabilitation program.

The psychometric measures completed by program participants included the Geriatric Depression Scale 15 (GDS-15), Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (R-UCLA) and the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI). In addition, participants were asked to rate their level of goal achievement. Of the twenty two participants who completed the program, levels of depression, loneliness and wellbeing had improved at a statistically significant level at post-test (depression and loneliness), and at 3 month follow-up (depression, loneliness and wellbeing), and more than half felt they had fully completed all of their set goals. However, a review identified that process issues were impacting on the co-ordinator's delivery of the program, and that the model was not cost effective. The model was then redesigned to increase the involvement of volunteers and free up valuable co-ordinator time. Funding for a further two years to run and evaluate the refined model (renamed Social Enablement) has been secured from the Silver Chain Foundation. The R.M. Gibson Scientific Research Fund monies will allow us to include a control group to improve the rigour of the study, and determine if any positive client outcomes found are attributable to the intervention.

Aims of Project

The aim of the project is to conduct a small randomised controlled trial of Silver Chain's Social Enablement program, to compare the outcomes in terms of loneliness, depression and personal wellbeing of older home care clients who participate in the program versus those who are waitlisted for the service. This will allow Silver Chain to determine whether any improvements in outcome measures demonstrated by clients participating in the program can be attributed to the intervention rather than to spontaneous improvement or natural variations over time.

Hypotheses

The primary hypothesis being tested is that clients who participate in Silver Chain's Social Enablement program will show significantly greater improvement in measures of loneliness, depression and wellbeing, than those clients who are waitlisted for the service. A second hypothesis will also be tested – that when this latter group of clients take part in the program after the waitlist period they will subsequently show similar levels of improvement in their social and emotional wellbeing compared to the original intervention group.

*Candice Patterson
Silver Chain Research Department
Supervision by Dr Gill Lewin*



References

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Governance in the Grey Area: Engaging Australia's Seniors at the Local Level

Andrea Petriwskyj is a postgraduate student at the School of Social work and Human Services and the Australasian Centre on Ageing at the University of Queensland. She is completing a PhD as part of an ARC Linkage project between the University of Queensland, the Queensland Department of Communities, and the Gold Coast and Ipswich City Councils. She is supported by a UQ Confirmation Scholarship and is supervised by Dr Jeni Warburton at the Australasian Centre on Ageing and Associate Professor Michael Cuthill at the UQ Boilerhouse Community Engagement Centre.

Her R M Gibson grant will support a study into ways in which local governments can provide opportunities for inclusive participation by individual seniors in partnerships and collaborations as well as other aspects of local governance. With population ageing, aspects of diversity among older people will create increasing pressures on local governments attempting to design opportunities for participation which are meaningful, inclusive and ensure representation of a diverse range of views. This is intended to inform local governance practices in Ipswich City and potentially in broader circles. This is a two-phase study, involving a series of focus groups encompassing a diverse range of seniors residing in Ipswich City, and a survey to explore previous participation in a range of governance activities, the key motivations, barriers and incentives affecting participation by seniors in the governance of Ipswich City, as well as the differences in the motivations, barriers and incentives reported among seniors of different age cohorts, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and other demographic variables.

Andrea has published a number of papers on this and related work in both Australian and international journals, including one which received the 2007 CNPS Alumni Australian Journal on Volunteering Student Paper Prize.

For further information or queries about this study, please contact Andrea Petriwskyj (Ph: 33469227; Email a.petriwskyj@uq.edu.au)

Andrea Petriwskyj



The Social Origins of Sleep Disturbance Among Community-dwelling Older Women

It is well known that sleeping difficulties increase with age and are more common among women than men. Sleep disturbances or disorders have frequently been conceptualized as an individual physiological or biological problem, often associated with illness or medication use. Social contextual perspectives argue that social relationships, roles and sleeping environments might be important contributors to the problem of sleep disturbance – especially among older women. Examples of the sorts of patterns which could be expected to be related to sleep problems among elderly women are: a preoccupation with family; concerns regarding mortality and/or becoming a widow; perceived invisibility; diminishing capacity to help spouse or family members; and adapting to living alone.

The prescription of sleeping pills, particularly the relatively high prevalence of benzodiazepine prescribing among elderly women is a worrying trend. Benzodiazepines are commonly used for management of insomnia and anxiety disorders among the elderly however they can also increase the risk of adverse effects, leading to increased risk of falls and fractures. Similarly, sleep disturbance itself is a significant risk factor for impaired concentration and functional ability leading to accidents and falls among the elderly. The broader social implications of the over-prescription of sleeping pills among the elderly poses the question of whether sleep issues are being 'medicalised' without due regard for the role of socio-environmental or behavioural factors. Whilst the types and prevalence of sleep disturbances and the related medical and physiological aspects of this problem are well-documented, qualitative evidence in terms of *why* elderly women develop sleep problems, particularly how they relate to women's social roles or their socio-environmental context, is scant.

This project will involve ten in-depth interviews with participants from the Australian Longitudinal Study of Ageing, based in Adelaide. Women will be eligible to participate if they are aged over 75 years, live in the community and have indicated at the most recent Wave of data collection that they experienced sleep disturbance and/or took sleeping medication. We aim to better understand how these women view their social situation, either currently or in an historical context, (e.g changing roles, family dynamics, personal relationship transitions, social expectations) as contributing to their sleep disturbance, and will explore patterns of response and variation among women who are married and those who are widowed. It is anticipated that this study will help to explain how or whether sleep disturbances reflect the roles of ageing women in Australia and suggest ways in which public health policy and practice can respond. Use of available quantitative information on participants will provide a further context for interpreting responses.

This research is significant in being one of very few studies in Australia to provide qualitative data on women aged 75 and over addressing the social origins of sleep disturbance. This project presents an opportunity to expand the biomedical/biological understandings of sleep problems with a social background to the issue. This sort of information may inform medical practitioners and social service providers about the reasons *why* women consider they have sleep difficulties and what they would like in terms of strategies or interventions to assist in 'treating' or preventing sleep problems.

There is a need to better understand the issue of sleep disturbance among the elderly from a sociological/public health perspective in an attempt to *prevent* problems associated with sleep disturbance and sleep medication. Whilst it is increasingly acknowledged that aging and health occur within a social and historical context there is little understanding of the nature of sleep disturbances among elderly women in such a context. Furthermore, research on sleep disturbance in later life has tended to focus on patterns that may be a result of illness or occur following bereavement, not in their own right.

Ruth Walker and co-investigators Mary Luszcz, Jenny Hislop and Vivienne Moore



19th IAGG World Congress 'Longevity, Health and Wealth'

Longevity, Health and Wealth

Call for submitted symposia now open!

Call for abstracts is now open!

XIXth IAGG World Congress, Paris 5-9 July 2009

General Information | Suggestions Corner | Links | Organizers Login | Contact Us | Site Map

The 19th IAGG World Congress is being held on 5th -9th July 2009 in the Palais des Congrès de Paris in France. The World Congress is a unique event bringing together experts around the world to discuss the latest findings in the field of ageing. If you have an interest in any field of ageing, attending this congress will give you the opportunity to mix and network with colleagues from all different parts of the world with similar interests. The breadth of information disseminated will be presented by senior, mid and early career researchers.

The program is primarily organised around four main themes 1) biological sciences, 2) health sciences/ geriatric medicine, 3) behavioural and social sciences and 4) social research, policy and practice. The main topic areas include new technologies, demography, economy, metabolic syndrome, education, end of life, anti-ageing, primary care and many more. There are a limited number of submitted symposia included within the scientific program. A call for 'Symposia' has been released with the deadline for submissions due 15th June 2008. All successful nominees will be notified in August 2008. The call for individual papers will open later this year. All relevant information and lodgment of your symposia can be obtained via the following website:

http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/nv/abstract_submission/index.php

In 2011 the AAG is hosting the 9th Asia/ Oceanic regional congress at the Melbourne convention centre from the 23rd – 27th of October. Paris gives the association the perfect opportunity to network, advertise and gain further knowledge in preparation for holding the 2011 regional congress. Paris is a wonderful city to explore and a great starting point for that long overdue holiday. For all general information and links through to expressions of interest, practical help on travel, accommodation and site seeing visit the following website. <http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/> All members will be kept up-to-date through monthly 'alerts' and the quarterly E-news, as information is forwarded from the Paris coordinators.

Congress Pre- and Post-Conference Tour

Northbridge Travel are again organising some pre- and post tour package tours to coincide with the 19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology to be held in Paris from 5th to 9th July 2009.

A pre-conference tour will depart Australia Friday 26th June 2009, travelling to Paris and then spending 7 nights visiting the Normandy, Brittany and the Loire Valley, before returning to Paris in time for the Congress.

The cost of this tour, including return flights with Singapore Airlines as well as the tour and accommodation in Paris during the congress will be approx. \$7,500.00 per person, based on 2 people sharing a room.

The post-conference tour will depart Australia on Friday 3rd July for Paris, and visit St. Petersburg and Moscow for 8 days after Congress ends.



Cost for this tour, again including airfares travelling Singapore Airlines to and from Paris as well as airfares to/from Russia and accommodation in Paris during the congress will be approx. \$9,500.00 per person, based on 2 people sharing a room.

There will also be the opportunity to combine these 2 tours, making a 25-day package visiting Normandy, Brittany and the Loire Valley before Congress as well as St. Petersburg and Moscow after congress. This tour will depart Australia on 26th June and return on 20th July, with an approximate cost, again including airfares, tours and congress accommodation of \$12,500.00 per person based on 2 people sharing a room.

The last tour will be in Paris just for the duration of the Congress, departing on 3rd July and returning on 12th July, staying in Paris for 7 night enabling delegates to enjoy both opening and closing ceremonies. Cost for this tour, again including airfares with Singapore Airlines as well as 7 nights accommodation in Paris during the congress would be approx. \$4,500.00 per person based on 2 people sharing a room.

If you are interested to receive more information regarding these tours, you can contact Northbridge Travel by email – northbridgetravel@tpg.com.au – or tel. 02 9958 5666.

Ruth Inall

Another View of the Beijing Conference

Of the 1,500 people who attended the Beijing conference last October, 900 were Chinese nationals from the host country and the other were 600 were *waiguo ren* or people from outside countries, often referred to affectionately as *lao wai*, or the old outsiders, a fitting touch for a gerontology conference.

While the main language of the conference was English and most of the programme was conducted in that language, there were also simultaneous panels in Chinese for the Chinese participants. They were well attended, with every room packed out and not a seat to spare. All the presenters were listened to attentively. Most placed their entire text on their PowerPoint slides so the audience could read along as they spoke.

Some of the topics covered included: use of traditional Chinese medicine for elderly diabetes and Alzheimers; healthy longevity; long-term care for the old-old; ageing and sustainable development; filial piety; geriatric nursing in hospitals, and mental health.

There were several panels on the particular problems of rural areas, the prime one being deficiencies in pension provisions compared to in the cities.

One Chinese panel I attended was concerned with tourism and ageing. Anyone who has travelled in China cannot fail to have been impressed by the sheer numbers of Chinese tourists who throng famous scenic and historical spots. Some are part of the over 40 million retirees in the nation. Presenters pointed out the benefits that tourism can bring to this 'silver-haired race' in terms of health, acquisition of knowledge about their country, new friends and general activity.

The Beijing of 2007 was quite different from the one I lived in from 1991 to 1994, the most noticeable difference being the ascendancy of the car over the bicycle and the replacement of old style courtyard dwellings with high rise apartment buildings. I wondered how life will change there for the growing numbers of older people over the next few decades.



Summer Palace, Beijing

Jill Miller



Upcoming Events

AAG/IAGG events

AAG 41st National Conference – ‘Ageing Landscapes’

Date: Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 November 2008

Venue: Esplanade Hotel, Freemantle

The 2008 conference will provide opportunities to explore the changing and evolving ‘Ageing Landscape’.

First call for abstracts is now open until 5 May 2008

For further information or queries, please contact East Coast Conferences:

Phone: 1300 368 783 (612) 6650 9800; Email: aag@eastcoastconferences.com.au

Website: www.aagconference.com

2008 Regional Conference at Wollongong NSW – ‘Getting on with Life’

Dates: 1–2 April 2008

Venue: Function Centre, University of Wollongong, NSW

The theme for the 2008 conference is ‘Getting on with life’ and will celebrate older people and the research, programs and people who find creative ways to thrive with chronic or disabling conditions. The conference will showcase some of the many research projects, practice innovations and support programs which encourage and enable people to overcome the physical, psychological and social problems they encounter in living with or caring for someone with these conditions.

Further information or queries, please contact the Conference Managers, East Coast Conferences

Phone: (02) 6650 9800; Email: info@eastcoastconferences.com.au; Website: www.aag.asn.au

19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics - Paris 2009

Dates: 5-9 July 2009

Venue: Paris, France

Key dates:

January 2008

Call for Abstracts

Opening of Online Early Registration & Hotel Booking

15 June 2008

Deadline for symposia submission

July 2008

Technical Guide & information for sponsors & exhibitors available

January 2009

Late Registration

June 2009

Publication of the Final Programme

July 5 – 9, 2009

19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics

Please visit this web page for the complete instructions for abstract submission:

http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/nv/abstract_submission/index.php

For further information: website <http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/>

Other Events

April 2008

National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre (NSPAC), Productive Ageing Forum, Counting on Experience: Preparing for an Ageing Workforce

Date: 1st April 2008, 9.30am – 3.30pm

Venue: Lyceum, Wesley Conference Centre, 200 Pitt Street, SYDNEY NSW

Phone: 02 9251 6088 Email: kylie.grieger@davidsonconsulting.com.au



Geriatrics 2008 Congress

Date: 5 – 8 April, 2008

Venue: Antalya, TURKEY

Contact: Sedat Boyacioglu geriatrics2008@flaptour.com.tr and <http://www.geriatrics2008.org>

May 2008

2008 ACSA National Community Care Conference - 'Magic & Myths – The Reality & the Potential'

Dates: 14-16 May

Venue: The Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney

Contact: www.agedcare.org.au

IQPC's Redesigning Healthcare for the Ageing Population

Date: 20-21 May 2008

Venue: Mercure Hotel, Brisbane

For more information or to register go to www.iqpc.com/au/ageinghealth

August 2008

Centre for Ageing and Pastoral Studies, 4th National Conference, Ageing and Spirituality: A Diversity of Faiths and Cultures

Date: 17-20 August 2008

Venue: Rydges Eagle Hawk Resort, Federal Highway, Sutton, NSW

For further information: Ph: 02 6273 8551; caps@csu.edu.au; www.centreforageing.org.au

September 2008

8th Annual Scientific Meeting: International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology (ICGP) Sydney 2008 - 'Protecting and Repairing the Ageing Brain'

Dates: Wednesday 3 September – Saturday 6 September 2008

Venue: Scientia Convention Centre at the University of New South Wales, Sydney

For more information: www.icgp.org or email: icgp2008@unsw.edu.au

European Union Geriatric Medicine Society, 5th Congress, Geriatric medicine in a time of generational shift

Dates: 3-6 September 2008

Venue: Copenhagen

For Further information: <http://www.eugms2008.org/>

ANZSGM Annual Scientific Meeting

Dates: 8-10 September 2008

Venue: Crown Hotel Complex, Melbourne

Contact: Emma Waygood 02 9431 8636; emma@conferenceaction.com.au; www.anzsgm.org

The 2008 National Dementia Research Forum

Date: 18-19 September 2008

Venue: Sydney Masonic Centre

For updates, please go to www.dementia.unsw.edu.au



AUSTRALIAN
ASSOCIATION OF GERONTOLOGY



ACSA 08 Aged Care in the Fastlane

Date: 28 September – 1 October 2008
Venue: Adelaide Convention Centre
www.agedcare.org.au

October 2008

ANZFP 3rd Australian and New Zealand – Falls Prevention Conference

Date: 12 – 14 October 2008
Venue: Grand Hyatt, Melbourne
For more information: www.anzfpconference.com

Ageing Community Conference

Date: November 20 and 21, 2008
Venue: WatersEdge, Sydney
Contact: Melora Stern
For more information: www.halledit.com.au/conferences/ageing/2007

November 2008

Asia Pacific Geriatric Conference

Date: 13 – 16 November 2008
Venue: Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel, Bali, INDONESIA
Phone/Fax: +62-21 314 66 33; Email: apgc@pharma-pro.com or isma@pharma-pro.com
Website: www.apgcbali.com

Positions Vacant

Research Associate/Research Fellow position within the Brain and Ageing Program at UNSW

Applicants from suitably qualified backgrounds are invited to apply for the role of Research Associate/Research Fellow within the Brain and Ageing Program of the School of Psychiatry and Brain Sciences UNSW. See the attached flyer for more information. The primary role of this position is to provide scientific and administrative leadership to the Memory and Ageing Study (MAS), a large longitudinal study of Mild Cognitive Impairment. Please email Lauren Norton l.norton@unsw.edu.au or Angie Russell angie.russell@unsw.edu.au to request an information pack. The closing date for applications is 2 April 2008.

PhD Scholarship, School of Public Health, University of Queensland

The Division of Epidemiology and Social Medicine, School of Public Health, University of Queensland, in collaboration with the University of Western Australia, has secured funding from the NHMRC and ARC to examine factors related to healthy ageing in men and women. Applicants are being sought for a PhD Scholarship. For more information email Professor Annette Dobson at a.dobson@sph.uq.edu.au. The closing date for applications is 15 April 2008.