

# THE SCOTTISH CENTRE FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE OLDER PERSON'S AGENDA



UPDATE NO.4

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Queen Margaret University College  
EDINBURGH

## From Margaret and Belinda

Welcome to Update No.4 of the work of the Scottish Centre for the Promotion of the Older Person's Agenda (The OPA Initiative). Our mailing list is growing larger by the day, as more and more people express their interest in hearing about the activities of the Centre and, in some cases, in becoming involved in these. We hope that our existing readers and our new readers will enjoy reading this edition - and for those of you who read our last Newsletter in June 2003, you may recall that we did ask you to 'Watch this Space', in relation to three items. All of these are reported upon in this edition - not least of which is the exciting news given in our first item below.

### A MAJOR BOOST FOR QMUC'S CENTRE FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE OLDER PERSON'S AGENDA (The OPA Initiative)

*Contributed by Margaret Alexander and Belinda Dewar*

We are delighted to announce that the Royal Bank of Scotland has provided substantial funding, of £1.5 million, to support the work of the Centre. This major investment, from the Royal Bank's Community Fund, will secure the Centre's future and is testimony to its pioneering work in making a reality of its vision of working together with older people, listening to their agenda and seeking to transform political rhetoric into reality, through research, practice development and education.

From 1 January 2004, the Centre will have a new title, to reflect the support of the Royal Bank of Scotland, i.e. The RBS Centre for the Older Person's Agenda. Soon, additional staff will be appointed, and we will move into larger premises within Corstorphine Campus, which will have improved access for

older people who attend various activities within the Centre.

Below, are a few extracts from the Press Release which was published last month about the Royal Bank's support of the Centre.

### EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS RELEASE

The Centre helps older citizens to improve their own circumstances and quality of life by becoming involved in research, practice development and education. The Centre has a strong record of involving older people in a meaningful way that enables them to contribute directly to policy development and delivery of services which affect them and staff will continue to build on this.

Professor Anthony Cohen, Principal of Queen Margaret University College said: *"We are delighted that The Royal Bank of Scotland is supporting such a crucial area of our work. Corporate investment of this type - and at this level - is what our universities need to ensure that their expertise translates into real solutions to the challenges facing society and has practical value in the community."*

Jeremy Peat, Chief Economist with The Royal Bank of Scotland said, *"Along with most European countries our population is getting older. The proportion of Scots in the 55+ age group is projected to rise from about 27 per cent at present to 37 per cent over the next 25 years. This is a huge demographic shift and must have massive implications for various aspects of our economy. Already there are around 75,000 people in Scotland working beyond state retirement age and almost a quarter of the Scottish workforce is in the 50+ category (self included!). Despite the major*

*implications of this population ageing phenomenon, and the extent to which it applies across Europe, there is still too little understanding of likely impacts and the required responses. Consequently, this initiative marks a very welcome addition to the economic, and wider, research agenda - and we must also welcome the direct involvement of older people in its operations."*

The Centre's current Director, Professor Margaret Alexander, CBE, voicing a view shared with the Centre's Research and Development Manager, Belinda Dewar, said: *"This is tremendous news. We read frequently about the importance of older people as a sector of the population, but all too often their voices are simply not heard, nor are they involved meaningfully in the issues that concern them. The RBS Centre will enable us to set up a national resource whose impact will be felt right across Scotland and beyond."*

Professor Alan Gilloran, Dean of the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, within which the Centre resides, said: *"The level of investment by the RBS reflects the significance of the work already achieved by staff in the Centre during its initial development stage. This work includes securing research funding, achieving publications, winning consultancies and engaging in the widespread dissemination of the Centre's ethos and strategic direction. The staff of the Centre must take much of the credit for this well-deserved success."*

## NEW PROJECTS

**Perspectives on Learning and Education in Later Life: policy discourses and informing narratives**  
*Contributed by Sheena Blair, Occupational Therapy*

The values and principles of the Centre for the Promotion of the Older Person's Agenda and the experience of working with two cohorts of people who were involved in the Centre's 'Education for Participation' course in 2002 and 2003 created the momentum to base the thesis for my Doctorate in Education in this area. In particular, I am interested in the relationship between political 'drivers', such as contemporary lifelong learning policy in Scotland, and the personal meanings that older learners attribute to their experience of learning

and education after retirement from work. Despite an emphasis upon lifelong learning as a pivotal concept in Scottish politics, the reality of the concept may not live up either to its name or to the related rhetoric.

My research is based within a critical qualitative approach and aims to work collaboratively with up to ten older people who have already taken part in the 'Education for Participation' course. The research will be in three phases, beginning with a textual analysis of the policy document 'Life through Learning through Life'. Simultaneously, the participants who have agreed to be involved in the study will consider a shortened version of the above document. Their findings in relation to both versions will be discussed between the participants and myself. Phase two of my research involves narrative interviews to explore the participants' 'learning stories' and the meaning for them of learning and education. These in-depth interviews will be transcribed, checked by the participants, analysed by me, and the key themes emerging from the material sent to the group. This will act as the focus for the second group. Progress with the research will be reported in the next Newsletter. If anyone is interested in the policy document or further information on the research, please contact me. Sheena Blair  
Tel: **0131 317 3803** or  
email: **sblair@qmuc.ac.uk**

## HEALTHY AGEING PROJECT - working with the Foundation of Nursing Studies

*Contributed by The Foundation of Nursing Studies*

The Foundation of Nursing Studies (FoNS), based in London, working in partnership with the drug firm Pfizer, has announced the 'Developing Practice for Healthy Ageing Initiative'. By 2020 the world's population will include more than 1000 million people aged 60 and older. The goal for nursing care is "to assist older persons in achieving optimal health, well-being, and quality of life, as determined by those receiving care or consistent with the values and known wishes of the individual". The Foundation and Pfizer hope that the "Developing Practice for Healthy Ageing Initiative" will help nurses to realise this goal by empowering them to develop and

deliver positive practice to support older people achieve healthy ageing.

The Initiative will initially target England and Wales, although the Foundation's Chief Executive, Theresa Shaw, hopes to secure funding to extend the programme to Scotland and Northern Ireland in the future. For the time being however, the Foundation is seeking interest from five nurse-led teams, based in England and Wales, to take part in this two year initiative. A grant of £10,000 will be awarded to each project team, who will also receive support and advice from the Nurse Advisors at FoNS and from the Foundation's external advisors, the Scottish Centre for the Promotion of the Older Person's Agenda.

Project proposals are now invited and should focus either on:

- The implementation of a specific activity to promote healthy ageing, or
- Developing a strategy for promoting healthy ageing, perhaps across a directorate or an organization.

**The closing date for applications is 19th December 2003.**

Like FoNS, Pfizer recognises the value of sharing and disseminating information about best practice. Both organisations will work hard to share as much information as possible about the programme as it develops. Reports of the completed projects will feature in FoNS' "Developing Practice Improving Care Dissemination Series". The Foundation will also work with each team to find publishing opportunities in the academic, nursing and popular press.

Further information and application forms can be downloaded from the FoNS website via  
**[www.fons.org/projects/healthyageing/](http://www.fons.org/projects/healthyageing/)**

Alternatively, contact the Foundation of Nursing Studies and request a "Developing Practice for Healthy Ageing Initiative" application form.  
Tel: **0207 233 5750** or  
email: **admin@fons.org**

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION AND SIMULTANEOUS EVALUATION OF AN 'INTEGRATED CARE PATHWAY' (ICP) FOR PATIENTS WHO ARE TERMINALLY ILL**

*Contributed by Jo Hockley and Julie Waters of St. Columba's Hospice*

This research study has grown out of the first 2 phases of the 'Bridges Initiative'. The Bridges Initiative is a 5-year project funded by St. Columba's Hospice, which aims to 'bridge the gap' between the Hospice and nursing homes. In the UK, currently, most of the deaths that occur outside the acute hospital setting, occur in nursing homes; yet the work that nursing home staff do receives little commendation. Often isolated from up-to-date continuing education, other than statutory training, staff working in nursing homes receive little education in palliative care. Caring for a resident who is dying is often complex as, in addition to trying to meet the holistic needs of the resident and organising appropriate symptom control, staff must also consider the needs of the family and of other residents in the nursing home. In recognition of this complexity, staff in one of the nursing homes involved in phase 2 of the Bridges Initiative wanted to introduce a tool or guideline to help them anticipate the care a resident might need when they were dying. It was decided that an 'integrated care pathway for the last days of life' (ICP) would be the appropriate tool, and the final phase of the Bridges Initiative involves piloting this ICP in independent nursing homes across Lothian. Eight nursing home managers responded to an invitation to take part in this pilot study. Each nursing home has identified 'key champions' who will lead the project from the 'inside'. Interestingly, six out of the eight nursing homes represented already have a 'key champion' who has taken part in the joint St Columba's Hospice/QMUC 'Palliative Care for the Elderly' course that is now in its 3rd year.

There are three of us who make up the 'external' team. Julie Watson is leading the evaluation of implementing the ICP, Jo Hockley is helping the key champions with the implementation of the ICP in each nursing home, and Belinda Dewar, from the Centre for the Promotion of the Older Person's Agenda, is involved in co-management of the project and is using 'action

learning sets' to help support the key champions as they face the complex issues of developing and changing practice.

The study started in October 2003 and will run for one year. We will have more information for you in Spring 2004. If anyone would like to hear more about the project please contact Jo Hockley on **0131 551 1381** or email [jo@stcolumbas.org.uk](mailto:jo@stcolumbas.org.uk)

## **UPDATE ON ONGOING PROJECTS**

### **SHARE – Scottish Hub for Access to Evidence about older people issues**

*Contributed by Fiona O'May*

The SHARE database continues to grow, and news of its existence was spread as far as Spain, when Fiona attended the Sixth European Sociological Association conference in Murcia in September, and displayed a poster and leaflets detailing the SHARE project to several thousand delegates who attended from all over the world.

The next phase of the project is to establish the network element, and we are delighted to have received funding from the Innovation Office, at Queen Margaret University College, to enable this work to be carried out over the next twelve months. As a reminder, the SHARE database serves to promote the sharing of innovative projects which aim to enhance the quality of life of older people. We welcome nominations for entries on the database, and our focus is to expand current coverage of initiatives in Edinburgh and the surrounding areas to the whole of Scotland. We also invite people to join the SHARE network, as the more members we have, the more vibrant and dynamic the community, and the more information and knowledge we can share and disseminate. All of this can be done online, at the SHARE website: [www.qmuc.ac.uk/opa/share](http://www.qmuc.ac.uk/opa/share) or by contacting Fiona O'May, email: [fomay@qmuc.ac.uk](mailto:fomay@qmuc.ac.uk) tel: **0131 317 3615**.

### **WORKING WITH OUTLOOK HOUSING - the 'Homeward Bound' project**

*Contributed by Pat MacKinnon*

The last newsletter reported the funding from the ESRC and the

Scottish Executive to support the appointment of a TCS Associate to develop a new service for older people.

I was appointed by QMUC and Outlook Housing in August 2003 to develop this project, called 'Homeward Bound'. The project will develop and pilot a new short-term rehabilitative care service designed to meet the changing care requirements of older people.

My previous experience includes working as a nurse on elderly care wards, completing a degree in English and Scottish Literature at Edinburgh University and a post graduate certificate in community education.

Having been in post for just 3 months, much of my work has focused on orientating myself to the wide spectrum of policy that relates to older people in Scotland and to attending short courses about the TCS programme.

I look forward to sharing progress about the project with you in the future. Meantime, if you would like any more information about the project, please contact me on **0131 556 4511** or email me at [patm@outlookhousing.org.uk](mailto:patm@outlookhousing.org.uk)

### **INVOLVEMENT OF OLDER PEOPLE: LESSONS FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING**

*Contributed by Belinda Dewar*

The Scottish Centre for the Promotion of the Older Person's Agenda recently completed a study which looked at the issue of involvement of older people in shaping public services. The study, which was commissioned by the Scottish Executive and COSLA, aimed to provide information about the current ways in which older people are involved in the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of public services throughout Scotland and to draw some lessons for the future involvement of older people in the Community Planning process. A qualitative methodology was used to obtain the views of professionals and older people. The findings provide us with descriptions about the range of current structures and mechanisms used to involve older people and insights into what constitutes effective involvement of older people in shaping public services. Both the professionals and older people discussed ways in which they would like to move the involvement agenda forward. This included adopting a more strategic

approach, extending and widening participation, and developing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the process and outcomes of involvement.

### RECIPE FOR LIFE

*Contributed by Chris Jones*

Recipe for Life is a project which aims to improve food-related social services for older people who live alone and have difficulty leaving home. The project is being undertaken in partnership with Age Concern Scotland and The Dementia Services Development Centre at University of Stirling and is funded by Zurich Financial Services. By speaking to older people, their family members, front-line staff, care managers and service managers we hope to find ways in which food-related services can be made more person-centred.

In the first phase of the project we have been speaking to a small number of older people who have difficulty leaving home and to their family members to find out about the support older people get with food and eating. The project is still at a very early stage; however, already some important issues are emerging that could help older people to eat well. These include:

- Loss of appetite or motivation to eat was experienced by many of the older people that we interviewed. That said, older people were able to suggest a number of ways to increase their interest in food.
- Older people felt more encouraged to eat when having a meal with friends and family and when food is well presented.
- A varied diet was thought to be important to increase appetite. However, some older people said that they struggle to think of new meal ideas as they have very little contact with food items. For example, some older people with mobility problems cannot easily get to the shops and supermarkets or even into their kitchen to look in the fridge. Older people would appreciate receiving help to make shopping lists, suggestions for new recipes and more frequent trips to supermarkets.

- Family members felt it was important that older people have a close, consistent and trusting relationship with their home care worker so that they know the older person's food preferences, can suggest meal ideas and can encourage them to eat.
- Older people said they would like to be able to be more spontaneous with food. This can be difficult when relying on someone else to shop for you.

The Recipe for Life project continues until December 2005. Further updates will be available in 2004. For more information contact Chris Jones, Project Development Officer, Tel: **0131 317 3771** or email: **cjones@qmuc.ac.uk**

### COURSES

#### Wisdom in Action

*Contributed by Yvonne Morland, Scottish Human Services*

From April to June 2003, 29 people from all over Scotland took part in a new pilot course called 'Wisdom in Action'. The course was attended by 18 people over the age of sixty and 11 people who work in settings and organisations which support older people. The course was run by the Scottish Human Services Trust (SHS), together with Belinda from the OPA Initiative at QMUC.

Designed as a leadership development course promoting the identity and contribution of older people in Scotland, 'Wisdom in Action' aimed to develop the capacity of individuals and the course group in identifying and challenging the causes of prejudice towards older people and in promoting more positive images and strategies for change.

The four main themes across the four days of the course were:

- Knowing who we are
- Keeping ourselves well
- Support with my name on it
- Having our say

Through presentations to the whole group and small workshop discussions, participants had the chance to examine their own experience and to hear about

innovative work in various parts of Scotland which showed that traditional service options could be successfully challenged and changed for the better.

Since the ending of the pilot course, participants have met again and in various ways are following up areas of concern raised during the course. In particular, they are taking an active part in learning about and participating in the developing strategy of Community Planning in their home areas.

Other 'Wisdom in Action' courses, to be held in local areas, are being planned for 2004. Further information on these can be obtained from Yvonne Morland at SHS, **1a Washington Court, Washington Lane, Edinburgh EH11 2HA** Tel: **0131 538 7717**

**To all our Readers - we hope you have a happy Christmas, and a Guid New Year!**

**Margaret and Belinda**



THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES

2002