

# UK Age Research Forum Newsletter

Fourth edition

Sept 2008

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## UKARF Working Groups

### Showcase day

The UKARF showcase day will be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008. Full information is adjacent.

### Priorities analysis

The questionnaires have now been completed. This group has been renamed the "Priorities analysis" group to better reflect it's work. The next stages of this research will begin shortly.

### Dementia

#### **Next meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> Oct**

The Dementia group submitted UKARF responses to the Nuffield Council Consultation on the Bioethics of Dementia and the National Dementia Strategy. An advisory group was also set up to assist in planning for the Dementia Research Summit, due to be held by the Department of Health. Future work of the group will be discussed at the next meeting.

## Welcome!

This fourth edition of the UKARF Newsletter provides information on recent progress and looks forward to upcoming events and projects. We encourage all members to submit points of interest to the Programme Manager to be featured in the quarterly newsletter, and/or the website.

## UKARF News

### Showcasing Age Research: Co-ordinating for the future

The UKARF Showcase day is fast approaching. This event is due to take place on **2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008** at the **Royal College of Physicians**, Regent's Park, London.

Key figures attending include Lord Sutherland of Houndwood, Chair of the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee, Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Science and Innovation and Dr Robert Butler, President of the International Longevity Centre, New York. Other speakers include those funded by Forum members.

Full programme and registration details are available at:

<http://www.ukarf.org.uk/resources/Shaping+the+future.pdf>

### Workshop and conference dates:

#### **Healthy Indoor Environments for an Ageing Population.** 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008, London.

A One-Day Conference Organised by the UK Indoor Environments Group [www.hpa-events.org.uk/UKIEG](http://www.hpa-events.org.uk/UKIEG)

#### **UK Stroke Forum Conference, Harrogate International Centre, 2nd-4th December 2008**

For further information visit: [www.ukstrokeforum.org](http://www.ukstrokeforum.org)

If you have an event to be publicised in future newsletters, please [email](#) the Programme Manager

## Members' News:

### Prevalence of dementia in the developing world substantially underestimated Wellcome Trust

Previous estimates of levels of dementia in the developing world may have substantially underestimated the problem, according to recent research. The findings suggest that policymakers in low-income and middle-income countries may need to re-examine the burden and impact that dementia places on their health services.

Recent estimates have suggested that over 24 million people live with dementia worldwide, with 4.6 million new cases every year. However, a number of studies have suggested that the prevalence of dementia in the developing world is between a quarter and a fifth of that typically recorded in developed countries.

Now, research published in the journal *The Lancet* suggests that this figure has been underestimated and that levels of dementia in the developing world may be much closer to those in the developed world.

The research was conducted by the 10/66 Dementia Research Group. The group is so named because less than one tenth of all population-based dementia research has been directed towards the two-thirds or more of all people with dementia who live in developing parts of the world.

Professor Martin Prince from the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, who leads the group, believes that a number of factors may have led to researchers failing to identify a significant proportion of cases of dementia.

"It's likely that cultural differences may be partly responsible for researchers missing cases of dementia," says Professor Prince. "Our evidence suggests that relatives in developing world countries are less likely to perceive or report that their elders are experiencing difficulties, even in the presence of clear evidence of disability and memory impairment."

The research group assessed almost 15,000 people over the age of 65 in eleven countries, including India, China, Cuba and Peru. The assessment consisted of interviews with the participant and, typically, a family member, as well as a physical examination and a blood test. The criteria used by the 10/66 researchers were

developed and validated cross-culturally across Latin America, Africa, South and South East Asia in an attempt to enable valid comparisons to be made between different countries and cultures even when a high proportion of older people had had little or no education.

According to the study, prevalence of dementia in urban settings in Latin America is comparable with rates in Europe and the US, though the prevalence in China and India is lower.

"You could question the point of labelling someone as having dementia if their relatives do not acknowledge it as a problem," says Professor Prince. "Our data suggest that even if it is not recognised as dementia, the illness places a heavy burden on both the elderly patient and their relatives. Being able to estimate accurately the true population of people living with burden is the first important step towards putting into place appropriate health and social care systems."

The 10/66 investigators are now analysing their data to examine the burden and impact of dementia in different countries, relative to that of other chronic diseases. This will include the effect of dementia on disability, dependency, strain on the carer, and the economic cost of dementia and other diseases. These data, in conjunction with the prevalence estimates now published, will enable policymakers in low-income and middle-income countries to prioritise more effectively, as they begin to invest more heavily in the prevention and control of chronic non-communicable diseases.

#### Links

1. Llibre Rodriguez, J. et al. Prevalence of dementia in Latin America, India, and China: a population-based cross-sectional survey. *The Lancet*, published online in advance 28 July 2008.

2. The 10/66 Dementia Research Group  
<http://www.alz.co.uk/1066>





## **Social neuroscience and ageing workshop**

On behalf of the ESRC the New Dynamics of Ageing Research Programme organised a highly successful pioneering workshop on social neuroscience and ageing, together with the US National Institute on Aging.

Twenty-four leading scientists from the UK and US reviewed the state-of-the-art in this new field, highlighted knowledge gaps and key research priorities and explored the potential for cross-national collaboration.

The full workshop proceedings will soon be available on the NDA website [newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk](http://newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk)

## **NDA ideas factory on nutrition for older people**

The three successful applications from the Ideas Factory, involving EPSRC, ESRC, BBSRC and MRC, which was held in January, are due to start within the next two months:

- Dr Paula Moynihan, Newcastle University, 'MAPP-MAL: Multidisciplinary approach to a prototype for prevention of malnutrition in older people: products, places, people and procedures'
- Professor Janice Thompson, University of Bristol, 'Migration, Nutrition and Ageing Across The Lifecourse in Bangladeshi Families: A Transnational Perspective (MINA)'
- Dr Arlene Astell, University of St Andrews, 'NANA: Novel Assessment of Nutrition and Ageing'

In addition, the final call of the New Dynamics of Ageing Programme invited Programme Grant applications, Applications were considered that addressed any area of the Programme Specification but with a particular focus towards those areas addressed by the BBSRC and AHRC research communities. 40 proposals have been shortlisted to be invited to be developed into full proposals.



## The Stroke Association Research Training Fellowships

Every five minutes somebody in the UK has a stroke. The Stroke Association is the only national charity solely concerned with helping everyone affected by stroke. Our vision is to have a world where there are fewer strokes, and all those touched by stroke get the help they need. The Stroke Association's research strategy aims to increase the UK funding base and capacity for clinical stroke research across the full stroke care pathway.

The Stroke Association is therefore launching a Research Training Fellowship scheme to encourage individuals to enter and further develop careers in stroke research.

### Junior Research Training Fellowships

Applications are invited for Junior Research Training Fellowships of £35,000 per year for up to three years on depending on suitable progress. The Fellowships are intended primarily for nurses and therapists to study towards a post graduate qualification relevant to stroke research. Applications from other health professionals may be considered.

Fellowships will be awarded to named candidates only from departments that can demonstrate past excellence in stroke research and a currently active stroke research programme. The host department will be required to provide appropriate supervision and a research training programme suitable for equipping the candidate for a career in stroke research, and to enable them to obtain a post graduate qualification.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is 9 January 2009. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed on 3 March 2009.

### Senior Research Training Fellowship

**Nurses and Allied Health Professionals:** Applications are invited for Senior Research Training Fellowships of £175,000 for a period of three years. Fellowships will be awarded to an outstanding postdoctoral candidate from the

Nursing or Allied Health Professions, and are intended to enable the Fellow to embark on an independent career in academic stroke research. The purpose of the proposed research project must be directly related to stroke.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is 9 January 2009. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed on 3 March 2009.

**Medical Professionals:** Applications are invited for Clinical Research Fellowships, which will be awarded jointly by The Stroke Association and Medical Research Council. Fellowships offer up to three years support, and are intended to provide an opportunity for clinically trained individuals to undertake training in stroke research.

The scheme is designed to accommodate the dual clinical-research training career path by allowing Fellows to spend up to 20 per cent of their time on NHS sessions. Fellows are required to register for a research degree, normally a PhD, based on research undertaken during the Fellowship.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is 30 January 2009. All Fellowships may be taken up on a part-time, pro-rata basis.

Further details, application forms, terms and conditions, and instructions for applicants are available from The Stroke Association website ([www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)). For specific queries please contact the Research Department by telephone 020 7566 0345 or email [research@stroke.org.uk](mailto:research@stroke.org.uk)

Our mission is to prevent strokes, and reduce their effect through providing services, campaigning, education and research.

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**The next UKARF Newsletter will be due out in December 2008**

**Please send any items you would like to appear to the Programme Manager:  
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**For further information about UKARF, please visit the website:  
[www.ukarf.org.uk](http://www.ukarf.org.uk)**