



## **Changing Lives in Ageing Societies: Exploring the Relationships between Ageing Research, Policy and Practices**

**Conference hosted by the Social Policy and Ageing Research Centre,  
School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin**

**14 May 2008**

### **Speaker Profiles**

#### **Garret FitzGerald**

A native of Dublin, Garret FitzGerald was born in 1926. He obtained a BA (1946) and a PhD (1968) from University College Dublin and also graduated from Kings Inns, Dublin and was called to the Bar.

Having worked in Aer Lingus for a number of years, Garret FitzGerald began a new career in 1958 as an Economic Consultant and Academic. He lectured in Economics and in the Affairs of the European Economic Community (EEC) at University College Dublin. This was a period of economic expansion in Ireland, and in 1959 he was elected as the first Chairman of the Irish Council of the European Movement.

He entered politics in 1965 upon his election to the National Senate, and was subsequently elected to the Dáil in 1969. His political career has had many high points: he was the leading spokesman in favour of joining the EEC (82% voted yes) in the 1972 referendum; in 1973, he was appointed Foreign Minister in a new coalition Government; in 1975, as Foreign Minister he led the first Irish Presidency of the European Council of Ministers; in 1977 he was unanimously elected as Leader of his Party (Fine Gael); in 1985 he successfully negotiated the Anglo-Irish Agreement with British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, whereby the Irish Government secured an unprecedented role in relation to the protection of the interests of the Nationalist Community in Northern Ireland.

Dr FitzGerald was twice elected as Taoiseach - in 1981 for nine months and in 1983 for four and a half years. In 1987 he resigned as leader of the Fine Gael party, and in 1992 retired from the Dáil.

Dr FitzGerald is currently Chancellor of the National University of Ireland, elected in November 1997, upon the resignation of Dr T K Whitaker. He continues to be involved in a number of private companies as Director, in

several consultancies, in lecturing and in journalism; he was the Ireland correspondent for the BBC, the Economist and the Financial Times and continues to write a weekly column in the Irish Times.

Dr FitzGerald is the author of books on a range of political and economic issues. In 1991 he published his autobiography - "All in a Life".

### **Sue Collins**

Sue Collins is the Principal Policy and Public Affairs Manager of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in the UK. She has over 25 years of policy and practice experience in the social care field, and has a long-standing interest in issues relating to disability and older people. Much of her work for the JRF focuses on how we pay for long-term care for older people, both now and in the future. Sue Collins has recently authored a report titled "How can funding of long-term care adapt for an ageing population?" She has represented the JRF on the Caring Choices partnership which also involved the King's Fund, Age Concern, Help the Aged and other key stakeholders. Sue Collins also supports other JRF work in relation to empowerment covering older people, social care and independent living. Her previous career has included working throughout the UK in the voluntary and local authority sectors. Sue is a qualified Social Worker and Practice Teacher (C.Q.S.W) and holds an MSc in Social Administration.

### **Mary Gilhooly**

Prior to taking up her post as Professor of Gerontology and Director of the Brunel Institute for Ageing Studies in the School of Health Sciences and Social Care, Brunel University, Mary Gilhooly, a psychologist by training, was Head of Gerontology Research for HealthQWest, a research consortium based at Glasgow Caledonian University. She has held posts at the Universities of Plymouth, Paisley, Glasgow Medical School, Southern California, and Aberdeen, as well as with the MRC Medical Sociology Unit.

Professor Gilhooly's research concerns issues surrounding ageing and older adults, and has covered topics as varied as petitioning the House of Lords on the subject of 'living wills' to research on the effects of playing chess and doing crosswords on cognitive ability in old age. Professor Gilhooly conducted one of the first studies in the UK on family care of people with dementia. Research funded by the ESRC includes studies on transport and ageing, and quality of life and real life cognitive functioning. More recently Professor Gilhooly has turned her attention to whether or not alcoholic consumption amongst baby boomers will be a threat to healthy ageing.

Professor Gilhooly was President of the British Society of Gerontology from 2000-2004. Recognition of her contribution to the social sciences, and gerontology in particular, led to her election in 2006 as an Academician in The Academy for the Social Sciences.

### **Rose Anne Kenny**

Rose Anne Kenny is a Professor of Geriatric Medicine at Trinity College Dublin. Her research interests are in neurocardiovascular function in ageing. The overarching aim of her research is to unpick the mechanisms for cardiovascular and cerebral dysfunction in the context of falls, blackouts, cognitive impairment and dementia. The research involves collaborative partnership with disciplines from basic science (developing animal models of cardiovascular and cerebral dysfunction) through to health service development and implementation. She has conducted longitudinal cohort studies of vascular factors in cognitive impairment (post stroke cohort, NCVI in the community, and carotid sinus hypersensitivity cohort). She has leading roles in a number of research projects and is the Lead Principal Investigator on the TILDA research project - The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing. Professor Kenny is a member of the FRCPI, the FRCP and the EUGMS Academic Board (European Union Geriatric Medical Society).

### **Richard Layte**

Richard Layte is a Research Professor at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Dublin. His research centres on the way in which individual characteristics and institutional structures influence a person's risk of poverty, disadvantage and poor health and the manner in which these elements interact across the life course. One of the main threads of his work has been the measurement and analysis of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and he has published widely on these subjects in both international academic journals and the Irish policy literature. His work also examines the manner in which individual characteristics and health systems shape personal use of health and social care services.

### **Karl Pillemer**

Karl Pillemer, Ph.D. is Professor of Human Development at Cornell University and Director of the Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging. He is also a faculty member in the Division of Geriatrics in Cornell's Medical College.

Dr. Pillemer's research interests center on human development over the life course, with a special emphasis on family and social relationships in middle age and beyond. For the past two decades, he has conducted a program of research involving staff in nursing homes and other long-term care environments. Projects have included a longitudinal study of relationships between family members of residents with staff in nursing homes, and the first scientific study of abuse of residents in long-term care. He has developed and evaluated a number of nursing home interventions, including model training, mentoring, and career ladder programs. The *Partners in Caregiving* program has been shown to improve staff-family relationships and has been used nationwide. Dr. Pillemer has written a number of articles on the crisis in long-term care staffing, and is the author of the book *Solving the Frontline Crisis in Long-Term Care*. Beyond the academic and

professional community, Dr. Pillemer has created publications for frontline long-term care workers themselves, including the widely-used *The Nursing Assistant's Survival Guide*. He is the founding editor of *Nursing Assistant Monthly*, an educational newsletter that reaches thousands of nursing assistants nationwide. He has served as a consultant to long-term care providers and trade organizations around the country.

In addition to his interest in care for dependent older persons, Dr. Pillemer has a major program of research on intergenerational relations in later life, with a focus on determinants and consequences of the quality of adult child - parent relationships. Dr. Pillemer is now conducting a large-scale study of this issue, with funding from the National Institute on Aging, which focuses on the issue of within-family differences in parent-child relations in later life. He also conducts research on ambivalence in intergenerational relations among adults. A second major program of research focuses on the nature and dynamics of family caregiving for impaired elderly relatives, which he has been carrying out with funding from the National Institutes of Health.

### **Andrew Reilly**

For the last year Andrew Reilly has been working within the pensions unit of the Social Policy Division, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD analysing the pension models for OECD, EU and a selection of Asian countries. Prior to this he worked as a statistician in the Department for Social Development in Belfast managing the Family Resources Survey and its associated outputs, with particular emphasis on child and pensioner poverty as well as benefit take-up.

### **Elaine Wethington**

Elaine Wethington, PhD, is an Associate Professor jointly appointed in the Departments of Human Development and of Sociology at Cornell University. She is a medical sociologist and earned her graduate degrees at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is co-Director of the Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging (CITRA) and the New York City Interdisciplinary Geriatric Research Center (NYC-IGRC). As co-director of these two programs she directs a pilot studies program that funds innovative work by new investigators at Cornell. Her research focuses on stressor exposure and its relationship to health across the life course. She is currently working on collaborative projects on stress and health with colleagues at Harvard Medical School, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Carnegie-Mellon as well as Cornell. Her work is currently funded by the National Institute on Aging, RAND/Hartford Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health Gene, Environment, and Health Initiative of the Exposure Biology program, a newly-funded program of the Roadmap Initiative at the NIH.