



Social  
Policy and  
Ageing  
Research  
Centre

Event in honour of Jean Manahan  
St James's Hospital, TCD  
March 4<sup>th</sup> 2008



# **Social Policy and Ageing Research Centre (SPARC)**

**School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Trinity College Dublin**

Dr Virpi Timonen

## We Promised to...



- ⑥ Produce and disseminate high-quality, comparative and policy-relevant **research** into the social policy impacts and implications of ageing.
- ⑥ Use research findings to generate **policy advice and insights** that can in turn be used by policy makers and practitioners to improve the lives of older people.
- ⑥ Foster a **new cohort of social gerontologists** trained to PhD level.



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# Areas of Research



⑥ Participation and inclusion of older people

⑥ Long-term care: institutional and community approaches

⑥ Older adults interacting with other age and population groups





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## ***Participation and inclusion of older people: ‘Living in Marino/Fairview: Activities, Supports and Services for Older People’.***



Participatory research project completed with the collaboration of 26 older volunteers. Completion of 205 questionnaires and 6 focus groups which explored:

- ⑥ issues of concern older people in the area
- ⑥ older people's opinions on local services
- ⑥ need for additional/enhanced services

Resulted in the development of:

A visitation team

Friendly call service

Age Action Care and Repair Services.

***Launched 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 by Mary Harney,  
Minister for Health and Children***







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## Experience of being involved in research



‘I thought you [the researchers] were very good at your job, you made it...If you weren’t like that we wouldn’t have gone, we would have been bored after one or two meetings, but you got us involved into it, that’s what brought us back [again and again], we loved going.

‘We interviewed a lady we did not know and she was a lovely lady and she answered all the questions. In her eighties... no problems... This lady...said when we were leaving, “call again to me” ’.



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## Long-term care: Advocacy and Participation in Institutional Care



One of the women in there, come four o'clock when tea is over she likes to go to bed...and she keeps saying 'Will I go down now?...So, one of the sisters turned around to her and said 'If you don't stop that I'm going to keep you up until the night staff and you won't go to bed until the night staff come out'. And the same woman has a very bad leg, pain in her leg...



## Quotations cont.



...That cannot be right can it?’ Well I went to the woman and said that’s not right you can’t threaten people like that....Oh we know what we are doing. I said...it’s wrong.

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The place has changed a lot in a year. It’s very clean and the staff seem to be doing different changes...So much has been put into place due to this group here.

I’d like to second [that]...since this group was set up, it has made a big difference....I now feel that if I see something amiss on the ward it’s OK for me to say that.



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## Older adults interacting with other age and population groups



### Understanding the policy implications of migrant workers' employment in the long-term care sector in Ireland.

We just enjoy each other's company...the local priest here told the family that [he] saw me and their mum laughing together and walking. And I said, yeah, because your mum is very – I think she is just being cute [*meaning in Ireland: clever in a playful way*] when she says something...and then I laugh and we are both laughing. So, I said maybe we are just being bold [*meaning in Ireland: audacious, like little children*] together. So, they are all laughing. I just laugh because she kept telling jokes...



## Capacity Building



### PhD Topics:

- ⑥ The subjective experience of dementia and user-led policy development
- ⑥ Assessment and decision-making in the discharge of older people from acute hospitals
- ⑥ Older people's participation in club-based sports activities
- ⑥ The social construction of ageing in Ireland
- ⑥ The impact of new models of intermediate care
- ⑥ Involvement of older people and their representative groups in policy development
- ⑥ Examination of methods for improving the quality of life of Irish nursing home residents

## International Networking



### **Migrant Labour in Eldercare Sectors (MILES)**

Meetings in Oxford, Berlin and Ljubljana, Oslo

### **ISA**

International Sociological Association (ISA) Research Committee 11 (Sociology of Ageing)

### **Visiting Professor**

Professor Ulrike Schneider from the Vienna University of Economics and Business  
Administration

### **Conferences**

Home Care for Ageing Populations: International Comparisons of Domiciliary Care  
Policies for Older People - March 2007

Changing Lives in Ageing Societies: Exploring the Relationships between Ageing  
Research, Policy and Practices - May 2008

### **Seminars**

International guest speakers



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## Observing and Publishing on Policy and Practice...







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## Linking in with Irish and International experts...

