

AgeingMatters

in Ireland

Season's greetings!



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Supported by Representatives of The Choir of Ages
as seen on TV

Age Action
For all older people

Age Action Carol Singing
Supporting Older People at Christmas

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bonavo



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■ Cover photo Age Action Carol Singers in Grafton Street, 2017

Opinion

Looking back on 2018 and towards achieving rights based policies



Paddy Connolly

Welcome to the final issue of Ageing Matters of 2018 and my first as CEO of Age Action. At this time of year we naturally reflect on the past events of the year while also looking towards the New Year.

In this issue of Ageing Matters we reflect on the success of Positive Ageing Week, sponsored by Bank of Ireland, which saw a record number of events being organised by partners around the country to highlight the meaningful contribution that we can all make to communities as we age.

Budget 2019

We also take stock of Budget 2019 which, while seeing some progress towards achieving income security for older people with an increase in the State Pension, restoration of the Christmas Bonus and an extra week of the Fuel Allowance, but this was overshadowed by the failure of the Government to reverse the 2012 pension cuts and a complete absence of provision of homecare supports which would enable those people who want to live at home to do so safely and with dignity.

Tackling the issue of ageism and the challenges we face as we grow older such as income security, access to adequate and affordable healthcare and maintaining our independence and dignity are what motivated me to join Age Action. I believe that the strength of public policy is measured by its ability to support our needs when we find ourselves in vulnerable situations.

Falling short

Currently, we know that our policies are falling short in meeting the needs of older people, particularly those of us who find ourselves in need of homecare support. As CEO of Age Action I intend to ensure that older people's voices are heard at the highest level of Government and that the lived experience of older people informs policy responses to their needs. Age Action will strive for a rights-based approach to how Ireland supports and plans for us as we grow older.

On behalf of the staff of Age Action I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Anna McCabe who served as interim CEO overseeing a particularly busy period in the life of Age Action. I also want to thank the staff, volunteers, members and all stakeholders who have supported our work in 2018.

Thank you for being with us: your experience and co-operation is critical in supporting Age Action's vision to realise the equality and rights of all older people in Ireland.

**Paddy Connolly,
New Age Action CEO**

New CEO dedicated to equality and human rights agenda

Paddy Connolly was Chief Executive Officer of Inclusion Ireland since early 2012. Inclusion Ireland is a national disability organisation that advocates for the rights of persons with an intellectual disability.

Prior to this Paddy was CEO of Cairde for 14 years. Cairde advocates for the rights of black, minority and ethnic communities in Ireland. As part of his work, Paddy has developed values-based approaches to equality and human rights advocacy and the application of values-based organisation management.

Organisational change

He has particular interest and experience in managing organisational change and strengthening NGO capacity to bring about social change. Earlier in his career, Paddy worked in social care, youth work and community development. He has practised as a certified family mediator and conflict specialist.

Paddy also holds a BA in Management and an MA in International Relations. In May of 2018, Paddy was appointed by President Michael D. Higgins



▲ New Age Action CEO Paddy Connolly

as a commissioner with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. He is looking forward to working with Age Action and other stakeholders in the ageing sector promoting equality and human rights for older people.

Please tell us about your housing needs

Age Action is keen to hear your views on suitable housing for older people

The Department of Health together with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government is looking at the topic of appropriate and sustainable housing for older people, and we want to hear your opinion.

Looking at your current and anticipated future needs, we

would like to hear your views on the topics below:

- 1) What is your current housing situation? (e.g. owner occupier, in private rented accommodation, in a nursing home, living in local authority sheltered accommodation, other)
- 2) Is your current housing causing you concern? If so, please tell us why.
- 3) Looking at your future housing

needs, what changes would improve your situation?

Please complete the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R2WPPXN> by Friday, 4 January.

You can also send your comments to Corona Joyce, Age Action, 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8 or phone 01 475 6989.



▲ Stairlifts are the most popular option for helping people to continue living in a two storey home.

Ageing in place:

Tips for homeowners

The global population of older people will, according to the United Nations, be over 900 million and many will choose to live at home, so **Justin Harve**, Canadian real estate agent and blogger, has prepared some tips on ageing at home.

Mobility around the home

Prioritising mobility around the home is essential for ageing in place. To ensure that wheelchairs will fit through doors and hallways, make sure there is 123 cm (48 inches) of horizontal clearance space in hallways and 91.44 cm (36 inches) for doorways.

To make T-shaped turns of 180 degrees in a mobility device, 152.4 cm (60 inches) in all directions is recommended. If adding a ramp to main entrances, the recommended gradient

Please note that you must consult and comply with Irish planning regulations.

is 1:15 or a 15 inch length for every one inch in rise.

Multi-level working areas

It's also wise to install multi-level working areas and ensure there's ample space for wheelchair accessibility. This is essential in home offices, kitchens, dining areas and any place

one desires to use regularly after retirement. Non-slip flooring should be considered as well to help prevent falls and cushion the body in case one happens. Cork, rubber and bamboo are excellent options that are easy to navigate with most types of mobility devices and provide resilient attractive flooring and are excellent for most rooms in the house.

Bathroom alterations

A good number of accidents occur in home bathrooms,

regardless of one's age, so it's never too early to make these areas more accessible, safe and user-friendly. For wheelchair manoeuvrability in bathrooms, the same specs will need to be met. Wall support should also be increased near toilets, showers, and along walls to prepare for grab bars. Consider installing hand railings on the open walls and be sure the supporting walls are suitable.

Consider investing in a walk-in tub in the main bathroom. The benefits of walk-in tubs include: lower, easier access; deeper soaking space; seats and safety bars. Increase safety and comfort in stand-up showers by using fold-down seats and handheld shower heads with long hoses.

Stairs are the biggest challenge that many older people face in multi-storey homes when ageing in place.

Multi-storey houses

Homes in multi-unit complexes may already have communal lifts, but the interiors of the home will need improvements similar to those in single family homes. Stairs are the biggest challenge that many older people face in multi-storey homes when ageing in place. It's vital to make sure there are secure hand rails on each side of stairways. People with poor eyesight may want to alternate the colours of stair risers and use lighting to improve visibility.

Homeowners who worry about moving between floors in a multi-storey home should think about installing a stairlift. However, there are space requirements for using these devices, and the quality of models can vary greatly. Make sure to go for an option with a backup battery in case of power failure. If the stairs are curved or make sharp turns, the installation costs will be much higher.

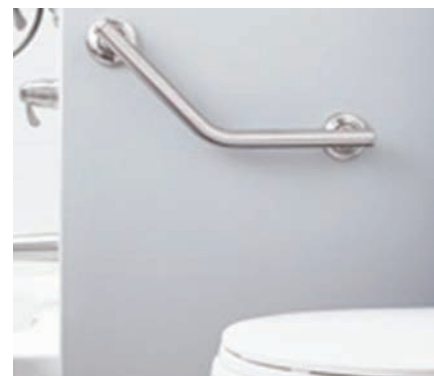
Additional considerations

Consider whether there is enough space in the home for an additional person to stay. The time may come when empty nesting must take a backseat for an adult child to return home, or it might be necessary for a separate space to be occupied by a caregiver or even temporarily provide rental income. And for those starting early with ageing in mind, this extra room could be the future place for one of the homeowner's ageing parents.

Smart home additions

One could also consider installing technological or smart home additions. Technology for the home has advanced to include door bells with video and audio, video cameras in each room and appliance and heating controls on smart phones. Most of these tech items are easy to learn how to use and save much time and make life easier for older people.

Those considering home remodelling or adding an extension may want to think about putting in at least a half bath into the extra space created. However,



if a separate cottage from the



▲ FROM TOP: Grab bars are important in several areas of the bathroom.

Safe ramps require a 1:15 gradient.

main quarters is a possibility, a full bath and a small kitchen will also be needed. Meanwhile, such additions are a great place to use as a home office, workout space, artistic retreat or a reading room.

Useful links

- <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ageing-and-health>
- <http://www.assistireland.ie/eng/> and http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/housing_grants_and_schemes/housing_adaptation_grant_for_people_with_disability.html



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Homecare robotics are already a reality

An exciting new UCD study explores attitudes to homecare robots for older people and their family caregivers in Ireland, Japan and Finland, writes **Dr. Susan Donnelly**, Assistant Professor of Social Work. We are conducting a survey on this subject.

As people are living longer across the world, it is widely recognised that the development of robots and sensors to watch over older people living at home is becoming an urgent issue, and in some countries, it is already a reality.

For example, in Japan, some of these assistive technologies have been developed and put to use. These care robots perform certain tasks to assist in caregiving, such as transfer assistance, movement support, toileting assistance, watching over people with dementia, bathing assistance and keeping records of care.

Purpose of the survey

The purpose of the survey is to understand people's awareness of, and attitudes towards, robots and to facilitate the development of homecare robots that meet the needs of older people living at home and their family caregivers. To achieve this, we are encouraging you to answer our questionnaire, which is enclosed in this edition of *Ageing Matters*.

We are delighted to be partnering with Age Action on this project and would like to thank them for their help and support in distributing our questionnaire.

Ultimately, research teams in the three countries would like to find ways in which older people and family caregivers are empowered and supported as part of the process of developing these

assistive technologies.

Family caregivers as potential users of these technologies are central to this study. For this reason, we are keen to seek the views of both older people and family caregivers.

Please take time to complete the survey

Your views are important to us and we would be grateful if you would take some time to complete our questionnaire. It should take 25 minutes.

After you fill out the questionnaire, fold it in half and send it back in the A5 self-addressed pre-paid envelope attached.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact:

- Dr Naonori Kodate, Assistant Professor in Social Policy; or
- Dr Sarah Donnelly, Assistant Professor in Social Work

School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice,
University College Dublin,
Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington Building,
UCD, Belfield,
Dublin 4.

Tel: 01 716 8472 or 01 716 8593 or email
naonori.kodate@ucd.ie or sarah.donnelly@ucd.ie

Positive Ageing Week 2019 in association with Bank of Ireland

There was a much bigger focus on headline events this year with three Age Action events in Dublin, one in Cork and one in Limerick.

The programme was as follows:

- Tech Tuesday supported by Bonavox and RCSI, Dublin
- Wellness Wednesday (Bank of Ireland, Cork)
- TILDA Public Lecture (TCD)
- Stella Cinema special screening sponsored by Bonavox (Dublin)
- House of Lords Tour (Bank of Ireland, Dublin)
- 100 Tips for 100 Year Life sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care, Limerick

Media coverage

Positive Ageing Week received excellent national media coverage this year with articles appearing in the *Irish Times Health Supplement*, *Irish Independent Health Supplement*, *Irish Independent Magazine* and *The Sunday Business Post*.

You may also have seen, or heard, interviews on Today, RTE Television, Pat Kenny Show, Newstalk (Prof Rose Anne Kenny, TILDA), Ray D'Arcy Show, RTE Radio 1, Newstalk Business Breakfast, Ciara Kelly, Lunchtime Live, Newstalk - interviewed Mary O'Rourke. We also received a lot of coverage on regional radio stations including Ros FM (Roscommon Community Radio, Youghal Community Radio, Galway Bay Community Radio, KCLR, Dundalk FM and Athlone Community Radio.

Positive Ageing Week will take place from 30th September to 4th October 2019, so put the date in your calendar!



▲ A visit to the House of Lords at the Bank of Ireland



▲ George Devitt and other Age Action members at the Stella Cinema during PAW 2018.

Transition year Getting Started tutors help school win IT award

Gaelcholáiste Mhuire AG secondary school on the northside of Cork city was recently awarded an Excellence in IT award at the IT Cork Leaders awards, writes Ciara Baldwin.

This award recognised the many IT activities in the school, including Age Action's Getting Started programme. Caroline O'Driscoll, chairperson of IT@Cork, said that this year they received the highest number of nominations ever, with a very high calibre of contenders, which made it even more special for the school to have won.

Special mention

A special mention was given at the awards night to our Age Action Transition year programme, where our students help local older people with their computing needs. This has been running for several years in conjunction with Age Action Ireland, and the feedback every year has been extremely positive. Our transition year students consistently mention it as one of the high points of their year, and word travels fast about how much fun it is to the next crop of transition year students.

Every year at the start of the Age Action computer course, our students are a little bit nervous about tutoring an older person they have never met before. However, they soon realise that the learners are from their area, that



▲ Getting started learner Dónal Murphy with tutor Kayleigh Cripps

The course was relaxing and fun with no pressure on you, just do as much as you were comfortable with. Thank you so much.

Marie Crean

they know their parents or grandparents, or that they are even past pupils of the school. The students say an important part of the class is the chat they have with their learners every week.

At the start of the term, we work out a series of teaching topics, but students often adapt

and teach whatever topic their learners are interested in, such as using their smart phone, editing digital photos or booking their next holiday. If tutors are unsure of something, they ask for help, but they are very bright young people and can usually figure it out themselves!

YouTube video

Last year we were lucky to have DreamLine media come into the school and make a short video of the students and learners working together. See it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWUFa6W2BDA&feature=youtu.be>.



▲ Paschal Donohoe TD, Minister for Finance, presented Budget 2019.

Budget 2019 round-up

Budget 2019 saw some small improvements in social welfare payments and benefits to older people, but Age Action is disappointed that the increase in State Pensions, both Contributory and Non-Contributory, is again delayed until March 2019, particularly as January and February often see older people struggling with higher utility bills.

We are disappointed not to see any concrete reference to home supports in Budget 2019. Homecare in Ireland is in crisis, with thousands of people currently waiting for support. A statutory homecare scheme is urgently needed. However, further clar-

ity on this is expected in the HSE Service Plan for 2019, which will be released in December.

We are also disappointed not to see an increase in the Living Alone Allowance or in the Telephone Support Grant, which benefits those living alone and receiving the Winter Fuel Allowance. An increasing number of older people on a fixed income are finding it difficult to pay essential daily bills in the context of current taxes and rising prices, making secondary supports



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

vital for older people.

There has been a welcome €4 million increase in exchequer funding for housing adaptation grants for older persons and those with disabilities, which will provide for 11,800 home adaptations.

The higher cut-off in eligibility for the GP Visit Card will mean that some older people under 70 will become eligible for a free GP visit. The €10 reduction to €124 monthly cap for the Drugs Payment Scheme is a modest help for older people struggling with the cost of medicines.

TCA 2012

We had hoped to see progress on reversing the 2012 changes to the State Pension, which continues to punish older people who do not have a full contribution record such as those who worked abroad and the self-employed before 1988.

Legislation to consider cases that are affected by the 2012 changes under the Total Contributions Approach 2012 (announced in January 2018) will be part of the forthcoming Finance Act 2018 giving effect to Budget 2019. In early October, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection announced that letters would be going out to those affected beginning the week of 7th November.

Budget lobbying events

Age Action values your input into our advocacy work on behalf of older people. We would like to thank many of you for attending the events back in April and May in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Castlebar where we heard your concerns and priorities for Budget 2019. In late September you may recall that we held a very successful joint event called 'A Fair Budget 2019? A Conversation with Older People' at Buswell's Hotel in Dublin in cooperation with Active Retirement Ireland and ALONE.

The purpose of the event was to bring together members of the Oireachtas (TDs and Senators) and older people from across Ireland. Over 50 members of the Oireachtas came to the event, and it gave them an opportunity to directly hear the concerns and hopes of older people from around Ireland ahead of Budget 2019.

The four priority issues identified by the three organisations for this event were:

- challenges around pensions;
- older person housing and homelessness;
- health and homecare: and
- loneliness.

It also provided a great opportunity for those present on the day to talk directly to their local representatives.

Budget in brief

- A €5 weekly increase from 25 March 2019 for those on the maximum Contributory and Non-Contributory Pensions. There will be a reduced increase for those on a reduced pension.
- A pro rata increase for people receiving the Increase for a Qualified Adult Allowance.
- An extra week for those on Fuel Allowance, which will now be for 28 weeks, (the rate is the same at €22.50).
- The Christmas Bonus is now fully restored to 100% of your normal payment (2018 rates).
- For people over 70 on the medical card, the Prescription Charge has been reduced by 50c per item to €1.50.
- The income thresholds for eligibility for the GP Visit Card for people under 70 have been increased by 10 per cent. This means the threshold rises by €44.70 a week for a couple aged 66-69 and by €30 a week for a single person aged 66-69, thus making it easier to qualify.
- There has been a €10 decrease in the Drugs Payment Scheme bringing the monthly cap down to €124.
- There has been a €4 million increase in exchequer funding for Housing Adaptation Grants for older persons and those with disabilities, to provide for 11,800 home adaptations.

Fundraising round-up for 2018



▲ Age Action's Anna McCabe with Sylvia Ryan of New Ireland Assurance who sponsored a 'spinning' cycle the length of Ireland.

There were many events and activities throughout the year to raise funds for our continuing work with older people around the country.

We continue to build and establish fundraising networks and encourage our members and supporters to organise events at regional level. We have strong regional offices in Dublin, Cork and Galway which provide vital services to older people as well

as their families through our Information Helpline, the Getting Started computer training programme and the Care and Repair programme, which carries out small jobs around the home.

Our supporters continue to support our work

financially through a wide range of activities that include regular giving, supporting our quarterly appeals and raffles, participating in marathons, sponsored walks and carol singing at Christmas. Employees in companies also volunteer their time to our services, and some raise funds which their employer will match.

Heart of Gold

Our annual charity fundraiser, Heart of Gold Day, is now in its second year and continues to go from strength to strength. We took to streets and shopping centres in Dublin and Cork to sell our gold pins and received a warm welcome from the public. We would like to see this as a national event taking place in all parts of the country, so if you can help or establish a local fundraising group in your area, we would be delighted to hear from you.



▲ Alessia Marongiu and Rachel Jackson collecting for Age Action.

Grocer.ie

One new initiative this year saw one of our volunteer tutors on the Getting Started programme set up his own company, Grocer.ie, an internet grocery store that offers a premium range of quality fresh foods alongside a wide range of everyday grocery items delivered to your door. This service is currently available in Dublin, with plans to expand nationwide soon. We will receive a donation for every purchase if you use the coupon code **AA001**.

The Mr Joseph Soap story

This year also saw the publication of *The Life and Times of Mr Joseph Soap* written by Thomas Martin while he was on a UN peacekeeping tour in the Middle East.

It tells the story of Joseph's life in hopes of bringing him closer to his family but also of educating them to avoid a repeat of his own past mistakes. 20 per cent of the proceeds are being donated to us. The book is available for Kindle at Amazon.co.uk. We have also teamed up with Castle Estate Agents who will make a donation to us if any member or indeed any house seller sells a property with them.



Bank of Ireland Charity of the Year

This year saw the second year of our partnership with Bank of Ireland in which they have set an ambitious fundraising target for our work. We are already well on the way to raising these funds through a number of activities.

Some of the highlights for 2018 include a Sunset 5k Run on Sandymount Strand, one of the many activities organised during Positive Ageing Week at the end of September. Over 300 staff and friends jogged, ran and even walked, and a delightful evening was had by all.

Another event was the World Cup Raffle in which Bank of Ireland staff bought tickets to be in with a chance to win a 50 inch Plasma TV, and a whole range of PlayStation Video Games.

Bank staff were also very supportive with our Annual Fundraising Day, volunteering two hours of their time to help us on the day. "They are a fantastic corporate partner to work with," said Daragh

Matthews. They have supported us in so many other ways, by sponsoring Positive Ageing Week to volunteering their time with in-house projects and support to other departments.

Walk a Rebel Mile

November saw Olympian Rob Heffernan and his colleagues walk the Rebel Mile around the Atlantic Pond in Páirc Uí Chaoimh where Santa even made a visit. Primary, secondary and third level students with their parents and grandparents across Cork City and County took part to raise funds for Age Action and the Irish Heart Foundation's CPR-4Schools Programme.

The aim is to promote health and wellbeing, particularly during the winter months, and remind us that even walking one mile a day will keep people of all ages outdoors for part of the day and help them stay fit and active. All donations will be matched by BOI's Give Together Programme. We are grateful for the support of Cork's Red FM for promoting the event.

Charity cycle

Bank of Ireland staff also hosted a charity cycle on the Waterford Greenway that raised €3,000, which was matched by the Bank. Over 100 cyclists took part in the event, with 50 cycling from the Quay in Waterford and 50 cycling from Dungarvan, meeting

at Coach House in Kilmacthomas where the Bank of Ireland Enterprise Town event was in full swing.

This follows on from another charity event by them in which members of the Munster Rugby team at the Waterford Castle Golf Club raised €1,100 through a silent auction, which again was matched by the Bank.

New Ireland Assurance

Another highlight for this year was the Centenary Charity Fundraiser from New Ireland Assurance. The target was to cycle the length of Ireland (486km) on stationary bikes outside Bank of Ireland on Baggot Street in Dublin.

The New Ireland Assurance and Bank of Ireland staff ended up cycling 1.5 times the length of Ireland (752.1km), and overall managed to raise €25,068.74 for us. Well done to all involved and what an amazing achievement.



Bonovox

We partnered with Bonovox who have agreed to support our Information Helpline, which is enormously helpful to us as we do not receive any funding for this service, which helps thousands of older people throughout the year. Bonovox



◀ Age Action's Anna McCabe, with Sean Crowe, CEO Marketing and Treasury, Bank of Ireland, and RTE's Dermot Bannon during our Backyard Blitz event.



▲ Pictured at the launch of Tesco Ireland's new initiative offering free Grocery Home Shopping deliveries for over-65s when they shop online are Tesco delivery driver William McDonnell, Age Action's Anna McCabe with Ringsend natives Florence Keating (aged 84) and Kathleen Delamare (aged 90). The initiative endorsed by Age Action Ireland and Minister Heather Humphries TD will see free deliveries for over 65s across Ireland six days a week from 3pm-7pm, Monday to Saturday.

Photo: Naoise Culhane – no fee

also sponsored Tech Tuesday and a screening of the movie *Roman Holiday* in the Stella Cinema in Dublin, two events which were held during Positive Ageing Week.

Backyard Blitz

While it was not a fundraising event it would be wrong not to record our thanks once again to the staff of the 450 Bank of Ireland and Age Action volunteers, along with RTE's Dermot Bannon who donated their time and worked so hard to make this year's Back Yard Blitz so successful. The difference they made to 200 older people in Dublin, Cork and Galway is as valuable as fundraising.

Tesco

We welcome a new initiative from Tesco which offers a free home delivery service for people over 65 when they shop online. We are delighted also to be one of the beneficiaries of the Community Fund which each month makes a donation to three

charities. This will benefit us over the next few months and into the New Year. These funds will help us continue to provide computer training for older people and, as the service expands, it will hopefully see an increase in the number of people getting online.

New Year's Resolution

Many of us make a New Year's resolution to be more healthy, maybe lose some weight after the festivities or even take up a hobby. But why not also consider setting up a regular gift to Age Action. It could be €5 a month, or if you donate more than €250 in a year and are a taxpayer, we can claim an additional 31% from Revenue, which makes your support even greater.

We are sincerely grateful to those who already support us each month, which is the life-blood of Age Action. We are truly grateful to everyone who supports us in any way. We could not do a lot of this work without you.



New Infographic on securing your home

David Dungan of HomeSecure.ie has some useful tips on how to protect yourself from burglaries.

Higher risk of burglaries

With the onset of winter and shorter evenings, burglaries historically go up.

The CEO of HomeSecure.ie, Colm Daly, had this to say: "Householders must remain vigilant and aware of home security leading into the darker months. We know that, according to An Garda Síochána, burglaries

increase by around 20 per cent once the clocks go back. Making your home less inviting to potential crime is critical.

"We also know crime prevention is much more effective than crime control, and we encourage our customers to do what they can to prevent a burglar from ever entering their home."

Useful tips

No matter where you live, you should take precautions to reduce the risk of burglary. To help with this, we have created this Seasonal Safety Tips Infographic

(above) listing 10 things to be extra mindful of heading into the winter months.

By taking these preventative measures, homeowners can minimise the risk of being burgled and help to reduce this year's annual increase in burglaries.

Useful link

<https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/our-departments/office-of-corporate-communications/press-releases/2018/may/winter-phase-operation-thor.html>

New study looks at older people and transport

Would you consider participating in a research study entitled *Linking People and Activities Through Transport Mobility*, exploring how older people in Ireland access their local communities, asks **Catherine Elliott**, Discipline of Occupational Therapy School of Medicine TCD?

Trans-European study

This study seeks to explore how you manage to access out-of-home activities, amenities and services in the local and wider community, what sort of transport options you use or rely on to engage in out-of-home activities, and how satisfied you are with the transport options available to you.

This research is part of a larger study that is being conducted in the UK, Canada, Australia, Switzerland, Sweden, South Africa, South Korea and Ireland, with the aim of examining common transport issues across the different countries.

We are interested in hearing from people aged 65 and older who are living at home. If you

decide to participate in the study, you will have a one-off interview with the researcher.

The researcher will ask you a number of questions about what types of transport you use, how satisfied you are with your level of engagement in out-of-home activities, the types of places you typically visit and how often you go there, as well as some questions on your general health and wellbeing.

The interview can be face to face or over the telephone, whichever suits you best, and it should take up to one hour. No personal identifying information about you will be recorded in the study.

As this is an international study, the findings from the Irish

section will be compared with the findings from the other countries to discover similarities and differences across the countries. No personal identifying information will be shared in the international analysis of the findings.

Findings to help shape future transport policy

There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in the study. The findings from it will be useful in gaining a general overview of transportation and out-of-home participation among people aged 65 and older. Comparing the findings from all the countries involved may help highlight areas for development and future research in ensuring better access to transport options and continued participation in out-of-home activities.

This study has been granted ethical approval from the School of Medicine Research Ethics Committee, Trinity College Dublin. If you are interested in participating in this study or if you would like more information about it, please contact me, Catherine Elliott O'Dare, at odarec@tcd.ie or phone 01 896 3220.



Help **at hand** for anxiety, panic, anger, depression



'Mental Health Through Will Training'

Recovery Self Help Method Ireland is a community-based mental health organisation that delivers a self-help care model, offering training in four step cognitive behaviour therapy in the peer to peer programme of Dr Abraham Low. It teaches techniques that help control nervous symptoms.

Group meetings are peer led. Everyone comes to Recovery with their own mental health story. Meetings, which last about two hours, are not a free-for-all or a rambling discussion. Nor can one individual take the floor for the night. They are highly structured so that individuals' stories and group comments guide participants towards a calm and hopeful appraisal of the future.

Members are advised to follow the care path outlined by their mental health professional. Many professionals refer clients to Recovery meetings. The key elements of the programme and the meetings are: that they concentrate on wellness not illness; they are structured and systematic not informal; they use examples from everyday life to help internalize information; they offer a message of hope. Dr Low says: "There are difficult, but no hopeless, cases."

Three key difficulties encountered by clients — isolation, stigma and despondency of mood — are addressed by fellowship, interpersonal learning and positivity. At Recovery meetings, members

learn practical coping skills that can be used in everyday life.

"At the end of all my meetings, the mood is invariably upbeat. I say, 'enjoy the feeling.'"

For further information, visit Recovery Self Help Method Ireland at Bridge House, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Dublin 10. Tel: 01 626 0775. See also www.recoveryireland.ie or email info@recoveryireland.ie

Dermot's story

I first became acquainted with Recovery's Self Help Method in 1976. The catalyst was my late wife Nora. Recovery came up on the radar as an aftercare support available when she was discharged from St Patrick's Hospital.

I went along with Nora to the weekly Recovery meetings then held in Fairview. There I was introduced to Dr Abraham Low's Four Step Self Help Mental Health programme. Initially, I was an observer and a companion. Later I was sitting some professional examinations and I suffered a panic attack. I tried some of the Recovery techniques and they worked. I studied the writings of Dr Low, attended meetings regularly and tried to use the system in my daily life. It provided me with coping and reframing skills that were applicable in every situation in my life. I was very grateful to Dr Low and Recovery and decided to try to pay back.

In 1979 I became Assistant Group Leader at Fairview. In April 1980, I started a weekly Recovery meeting in Drumcondra. I have now been Group Leader there for 38 years.

U3Agroups

📍 Active Virginians U3A

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📍 Blessington U3A

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📍 Club 50, Donegal U3A

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Josephine Murphy at (051) 871-037

📍 Wexford Town U3A

Deirdre or Ed at (089) 227-8021

For more information, email Carol, U3A Administrator, at u3a@ageaction.ie or call (01) 475-6989 (Wednesday, Thursday or Friday).

Care & Repair spreading Christmas spirit

A decorated Christmas tree makes a home feel special at Christmas, but unfortunately not everybody can decorate their homes. One of the most enjoyable jobs that Care & Repair volunteers do for older people is to put up their Christmas decorations in December and take them down in January.

“Everybody likes to have their house decorated at Christmas time, and older people often have visits from grandchildren during the holidays,” said Age Action’s John O’Mahony. “Moving a Christmas tree can be an impossible task for some, as can putting up other decorations around the house. Our Care & Repair teams are delighted to be able to help with this. It really is one of the nicest jobs we get to do.”

The Care & Repair service provides lots of help to keep people safe and warm during the winter. Volunteers clear pathways, block drafts, replace



light bulbs, install smoke alarms and assist in any way we can. We can also install carbon monoxide alarms free of charge.

To request a Care & Repair job call your local Care & Repair service or any Age Action office.

Annual membership application

I wish to join Age Action and enclose € membership fee, plus €..... voluntary donation payable to Age Action Ireland Ltd.

If you are already an existing Age Action member and wish to renew your membership, please write your membership number here

Full name:
(Block capitals please)

Address:.....
.....

Tel:

Email:
(Block capitals please)

Date:

FEES

- €20 Individual – retired/unwaged
- €40 Individual – employed
- €60 Voluntary Body
- €200 Statutory Agency
- €500 Commercial

STANDING ORDER

To the Manager
(Name of Bank/Building Society)

Bank Address:

Please pay annually to Age Action Ireland,
Permanent TSB, 70 Grafton Street, Dublin 2,
BIC: IPBSIE2D

IBAN: IE82 IPBS 9906 2587 7790 21

the following amount €
until further notice. Starting on: 1st day of
January 20

Name:
(Block capitals please)

BIC:

IBAN:.....

Signature:.....

Please return to:

Membership Development,
Age Action Ireland CLG,
10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8.
Email: membership@ageaction.ie
Tel: (01) 475 6989