

Who is involved?

At Bangor:

Professor Bob Woods, Dementia Services Development Centre; Chief Investigator



Dr Gill Windle, Dementia Services Development Centre; project manager, lead of resilience work package.

Professor Linda Clare, School of Psychology, lead of cognitive reserve work package.

At Swansea:

Professor Vanessa Burholt, Centre for Innovative Ageing; lead of the impact and changes in social networks.



Professor Judith Phillips, Centre for Innovative Ageing.

At Cambridge:

Professor Carol Brayne, lead of MRC-CFAS, Department of Public Health and Primary Care; incidence and prevalence estimates.

Dr. Fiona Mathews, MRC Biostatistics Unit; incidence and prevalence estimates

At Liverpool:

Dr. Cherie McCracken,



School of Population, Community and Behavioural Sciences; the impact of B12 on cognition work package & Dr. Kate Bennett, School of Psychology.

In Wales: The project will benefit from dedicated support from NISCHR CRC.



If the onset of dementia could be delayed by five years, the number of people affected could be approximately halved, so that the number of people over 65 with dementia in 2031 would then be similar to the 2007 figure (Alzheimer's Scotland, 2007). Factors that may moderate the onset of dementia clearly deserve further investigation.

If you are aged sixty five or over, you may receive a letter inviting you to join the project. We hope you will take part.

The project team would be delighted to come and talk to groups in the area about the project. Please contact us at the details below.



Maintaining Function and Well-Being: A Longitudinal Cohort Study

<http://cfaswales.bangor.ac.uk/>

Dementia Services Development Centre,

The Institute of Medical and Social Care Research

Bangor University, Ardudwy, Normal Site,

Bangor, Gwynedd, Wales. LL57 2PZ

Contacts:

Professor Bob Woods, b.woods@bangor.ac.uk

Dr. Gill Windle, g.windle@bangor.ac.uk (01248) 383968

Dr. Catherine MacLeod, research officer,

c.a.macleod@bangor.ac.uk, (01248) 388030

Professor Vanessa Burholt, v.burholt@swansea.ac.uk, (01792) 602906



CFASCYMRU
GWEITHREDIAD GWBYDDOL A HENEIDDIO

CFASWALES
COGNITIVE FUNCTION AND AGEING

More groundbreaking research in ageing
is underway in Wales



This major project will address key
questions about later life and ageing that
currently cannot be answered by other
sources



Cyngor Cyllido Addysg
Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding
Council for Wales



Background

Older people are living longer and form a greater proportion of the population than ever before. By 2025, for the first time in history, 20% will be over 65 and 5.5% over 80. Each generation of older people ('cohort') differs from those that went before. They have different life



experiences, expectations and views of the world. Their approaches to retirement, leisure, health, activity, nutrition and exercise differ from those of their parents' generation, as do their ideas regarding how needs for care and support should be met, influenced perhaps by changes in families and in society.



Although many people enjoy later life, statistics suggest that dementia rates in the UK will increase by 38% over the next 15 years and 154% over the next 45 years. These changes indicate that up to date information, which can simultaneously consider a large number of factors important for healthy ageing, is now required for the accurate projection of future need and provision in Wales.



Aims

An important aspect of the project is the ability to compare the results with those of the same survey conducted in Gwynedd in the mid 90's, to see how older people's networks of social relationships have changed in the face of great changes in social structures and families over this time period.



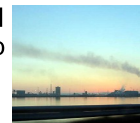
It will be able to see whether the extent of changes in memory and thinking ability at a given age have reduced with general improvements in health, exercise and activity.

There is some evidence that having a higher level of education, remaining active, physically and mentally, having a more active social life and being bilingual can be protective in later life. This is called the 'cognitive reserve'.

The research will explore what makes some older people better able to negotiate difficult life circumstances than others, to be resilient. It will examine whether resilience can help a person have greater well-being if changes in memory, thinking and health status are experienced, and test the extent to which resilience ameliorates the impact of cognitive impairment.



Nutritional changes (measures of B12 deficiency and folate status) impact on changes in cognition. The research will characterise the interplay between biochemical, cultural and lifestyle factors and determine their relationship to overall cognitive function.



Added value of the research

This study benefits from the methods used having been tried and tested in previous research. This includes the procedures for identifying the older people to be approached from General Practitioner lists; procedures for training interviewers and for carrying out the interviews; tests of memory and thinking; and the methods of recording and managing and analysing all the large amount of data generated.



The core of the data will be combined with an on-going study using the same procedures in 3 sites in England (MRC-CFAS). This will generate a combined sample of 12,500 older people for providing accurate estimates of health and of levels of memory and thinking, and of mood.



The next steps



3500 people aged 65 and over will be interviewed twice, two years apart. These will be recruited from areas in Gwynedd and Ynys Môn in the North, and Neath Port Talbot in the South.



The first phase of interviewing will start in May 2011. Interviewing 3500 older people on two occasions is a major undertaking, but this number is needed in order to gain a better, accurate understanding of the changes in the experience of ageing.