Going Forward with OPAN: 
Building Older People and Ageing 
Research Capacity in Wales

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Why an Older People and Ageing Network?

- Demographic imperative
- Policy priority
- Need to involve older people in research
- A broader vision of ageing
The Vision for Wales

Making Wales *the* place to do research into ageing and older people

- Collaborative infrastructure
- Evidence-based culture
- Services tailored to the needs of communities and individuals and delivered by research-aware practitioners
Aims

1) To enhance the quality and volume of research on ageing
2) To improve integration of policy, practice and research
3) To facilitate and strengthen collaborative research across and within sectors
4) To improve the coordination of research across health and social care and clinical specialisms
5) Increase the participation of older people in the research process
Achieving the Vision—Progress Highlights

• 27 research proposals submitted and 15 funded, totalling over £2.5m

• Held 3 major conferences and 20 research seminars; plus major London based conference showcasing research in Wales

• Established Research Development Groups and a policy forum

• Appointed a coordinator and research portfolio development fellows (OPAN and Stroke)
Progress Highlights

- Bulletin, web, directory of expertise
- Links with other networks and organisations (Wales, UK and International)
- Collaborating with policy and practice at the WAG
- Developing research capacity (PhD studentship)
Research Development Groups

- Stroke research
- Social care outcomes
- Independent living
- Impact of climate change and emergency preparedness and response
- Participatory approaches
- Carers and bereavement
Research Portfolio: Social and Health Care

- Extracare: For Fit or Frail Older People? (WORD)
- Dignity in Practice (NIHR)
- Developing Social Care Research (CRCC)
- Unified Assessment in Wales (WORD)
- Prevention and Intervention in the Disablement Process (WORD)
- An Evaluation of Ageing Well (WAG and Age Concern)
- SAFER Trial (Support and Assessment for Fall Emergency Referral) (DH)
Research Portfolio: Social and Health Care

• Systematic Review of Mental Well Being (NICE)
• Action Research to Reduce Repetition of Stroke (WORD PHD studentship)
• National Epidemiology Wales (WORD)
• Development of Services for Older People in the 21st Century (RCT/Powys CC)
• Social Care Research Priorities and Capacity in Wales (WORD)
• International Recruitment in Social Care Services in Wales (WORD)
Research Portfolio: Environments of Ageing

- Older People’s Use of Unfamiliar Space (ESRC-NDA)

- Connectivity of Older People in Rural Civic Society (ESRC-NDA awaiting outcome)
Plans for Future Development

- Collaborative research
- Target particular areas of strength
- Broader research-policy-practice links
- Develop relationships with other stakeholder groups
- Expand participatory approaches with older people
- Media strategy
- Capacity building through surgeries, incentives
Worldwide Presence

Older People and Ageing R&D Network (OPAN Cymru)

www.opanwales.org.uk