



Psychology and Ageing Interest Group

Newsletter Issue No. 14

2010

*You are never too old to be what you might have been.
George Elliot*

Forward

I am quite surprised that the time has come for another newsletter! I would like to thank all of the contributors for their input. I hope our members enjoy reading about the news and developments from across the country.

I would also like to congratulate the winners of The Elsie Harwood Award and the Ed Helmes Student Travel Awards listed near the end of the newsletter.

Jay Brinker
Editor

Report of the Chair, PAIG AGM, 2010

Psychology and Ageing Interest Group Members-

I am happy to report that in 2009-2010 the National Psychology and Ageing Interest Group continued to quietly gain members and sponsor important initiatives. We are continuing to support efforts to facilitate psychology postgraduate trainees working in residential aged care settings. This

follows a number of position statements and appeals to government to try to improve access for persons in RACFs to psychological care.

Ageing also continues to rise in prominence within the APS and its publications. Healthy ageing featured as a topic for Psychology Week a few years ago, and in 2008 the cover story of InPsych featured the role of psychologists in nursing homes. This issue generated quite a bit of interest across the country. In 2010 the trend continues with a cover story in InPsych about the role of psychologists in assessment and treatment of dementia.

Regarding conferences, 2009 was the gap year but next year we are gearing up again for our national conference. We are considering a number of venues and will keep members posted via email.

Once again I have enjoyed member's interactions via the e-mail listserv, which is a good way to keep members in touch. If you know anyone in the ageing area who would like to join the listserv, have him or her send me an email.

As has been the case in the previous years, PAIG appears to be steadily attracting numbers.

Victoria	111 members
New South Wales	113 members
Queensland	54 members
South Australia	18 members
Western Australia	15 members
Australian Capital Territory	15 members
Tasmania	3 members
Overseas	4 members

I note that many of these new members are students – always a positive and welcome sign!

I would like to thank everyone who helped with PAIG activities this year – there are too many to thank individually, but I thank you heartily one and all!

Warm regards,



***Nancy Pachana,
National Convener,
APS PAIG***

SA Branch

Carol Hunter

State Convener, PAIG (SA Branch)

Carol Hunter, State Convener 2010

The group elected a new convener, Carol Hunter, in May 2010, and would like to thank previous convener Paul Kemp. Following a lengthy period of inactivity, PAIG SA has met on two occasions, June 2010 and August 2010.

In June, Chris Materne of Flinders University gave a presentation of her current research investigating memory self-efficacy and memory training

interventions in individuals with a diagnosis of dementia. This was followed by a clinical case presentation with a focus on assessment of suicidal behaviour in the context of dementia.

The August meeting was well attended, with a presentation from Margaret Brown of the Hawke Research Institute on aspects of end of life care, including guardianship, and how to have those difficult conversations with clients.

There is a meeting scheduled for November 2010, with a presentation on ageing and suicide. In early 2011 we have a presentation on relationship difficulties in older couples.

We hope to continue to have regular meetings, with the key aim to provide useful and informative sessions for professionals working with older populations both clinically and in a research capacity. We hope to attract more members in 2011 and encourage participation and interest in working with older people.

ACT Branch

Tim Windsor

ACT Co-ordinator

This year the ACT APS-PAIG has continued to follow our ever-popular breakfast meeting format, hearing from different researchers and clinicians specialising in aspects of psychology and aging. In May, postgraduate student Prapti Gautam from the Australian National University's Centre for Mental Health Research gave a talk on her research concerned with structural and functional changes in the ageing brain, and the implications of these changes for cognition. In September we will hear from Dr Rajeev Kumar, Psychiatrist at The Canberra Hospital and senior lecturer at the ANU medical school, who will share clinical insights regarding assessment and treatment of depression in the medically ill and elderly. We are also looking forward to a presentation from Professor David Bunce of London's Brunel University later in the year. An expert in cognitive

neuropsychology, Professor Bunce will discuss his research concerned with the interface between mental health and cognition in later life.

QLD Branch

Nancy A. Pachana

Qld Co-ordinator

This year has been one filled with international speakers and new initiatives. We now have a small student interest group section within the QLD PAIG group. This student group held its inaugural event, when they hosted Professor Constanca Paul (University of Porto) and Dr Oscar Ribeiro (University of Aveiro) from Portugal for an evening of interesting talks about their work in Portugal at a local Brisbane restaurant. We wish the students well in building up interest among their cohort for working with older adults.

We also had Professor Bob Knight from the University of Southern California offer a workshop on assisting caregivers of frail elders. Bob has 20+ years experience of working with this population, including cultural adaptations for those of non-English speaking backgrounds.

If you are interested in this topic yourself, Bob suggests three key readings:

- Knight, B.G. & Sayegh, P. (2010). Cultural values and caregiving: The updated sociocultural stress and coping model. *Journals of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 65B, 5-13. [JGPS 65th Anniversary Celebration Article].
- Kim, J.H., Knight, B.G., & Flynn Longmire, C.V. (2007). The role of familism in stress and coping processes among African American and White dementia caregivers: Effects on mental and physical health. *Health Psychology*, 26, 564-576.
- Qualls, S. H. Caregiver family therapy. In Laidlaw, K. & Knight, B. (Eds) (2008). *Handbook of emotional disorders in later life: Assessment and treatment*. New York: Oxford University Press.

We had a very successful Christmas party in 2009 at Eve's on the River in Brisbane, attended by many students as well as long-time members.

VIC Branch

Yvonne Wells

VIC Coordinator

The Victorian branch of the PAIG has had a busy year, and the three meetings held to date were well attended. Our May and September meetings had 20 or more attendees, due in part perhaps to our decision this year to vary the location of meetings. We conducted an online survey of members at the beginning of the year, which showed:

- Most members work in the field of ageing and are interested in keeping informed about the latest ageing news.
- In order of popularity, members reported to be most interested in healthy ageing, clinical psychological conditions (e.g. dementia or stroke), social issues (e.g. social participation) and aged care.
- There were some members who live further away from Melbourne, and found it more difficult to attend PAIG events. However, the vast majority of members listed the City, Swinburne and Hawthorn as the most convenient locations.
- While there was a slight preference for events to be held either at 6pm or 7pm (on any day), several members gave the useful suggestion to regularly change event times (e.g. have one event in the afternoon) to facilitate attendance.
- Interestingly, most members preferred to have the events held in a University Meeting Room, rather than at cafes/restaurants, and all members would be happy to contribute \$10 or less to an event.
- Some members suggested organising a networking event (without a speaker)

so that fellow PAIG members can introduce and get to know each other.

Our first meeting of the year was held at Latrobe University, City Campus in March. A panel discussion was held on the "Ten things I wish I had known about older people!" Our panel included clinicians, researchers and advocates with diverse expertise, each of whom talked about things that they wish they had known earlier in their careers.

Our May meeting was held at Monash University, Caulfield Campus. The topic was "What do older people really think about retirement housing?". Jayne Maini, Director and Placement Manager at Millenium Aged Care Placement Consultants, Rob Taft, a resident at Rylands in Kew, and Mark Silver, a social worker with Uniting Aged Care, presented a wonderful insight into the issues surrounding housing in later life, from retirement to residential care.

"Recent advances in clinical work with older people" were discussed at our recent September meeting. Dr Sunil Bhar, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Swinburne University, discussed "Counselling older adults in university psychology clinics: Why, how and where?". His talk was prefaced by a brief presentation by Associate Professor Roger Cook, who gave a retrospective account of the Swinburne psychology clinic and its proposed direction for servicing older adults. Our third speaker, Alissa Westphal, an Occupational Therapist working with people with dementia, unfortunately became ill at the last moment and we hope to have her present at our end of year meeting in November. We were very grateful to Mark Silver for stepping in and presenting the very interesting results of his recent study on an emotional well-being project., which included excerpts from video footage of a men's carer support group.

We look forward to our end of year meeting in November, at which Heather Birch will be presenting on "Dementia: Lesbians and Gay Men". We hope Alissa Westphal will also be able to join us. The

date and location of this meeting will be confirmed via email to members and associates shortly. If you are not already a PAIG member and you are interested in joining us for our end of year celebration, please contact b.parker@latrobe.edu.au

Kind regards

Yvonne Wells
Convenor, PAIG-Vic

NSW Branch

Michael McMahon and Deborah Koder

State convenors 2009-2010

Attendance at our quarterly meetings has been steady with a range of speakers covering neuropsychology, theoretical issues and clinical practice.

Due to an unavoidable clash, the August 2009 meeting was postponed until November when Valorie O'Keefe from Pearson presented a two-hour overview of the WAIS/WMS IV with a focus on changes that will benefit the assessment of older adults. The test materials and booklets were made available for viewing. In February 2010, Valorie O'Keefe, returned to present us with the new Advanced Clinical Solutions material relating to the WAIS IV and WMS IV. This was followed at our May meeting by a very interesting talk from Sue Ferguson of Macquarie University on theories of successful ageing and their implications for clinical work with older adults. Deborah Koder was elected as the new NSW convenor and we thanked Michael McMahon for his many years of hard work leading the group, ably assisted by Jane Turner who presented her review work on behavioural gerontology at the International Congress of Applied Psychology.

We hope to host a half-day workshop some time next year and promoting clinical placements within our aged care settings is another key aim of the group.

MEMBER PROFILE



Dr Hemalatha Sivakumaran completed her BA SocSc and Honours (BSc) at Monash University and her DClinPsych at the University of Newcastle. Hema's interest in working with Aged Persons Mental Health began with her first job in the Hunter-New England Health Service. Since then she has served in acute Adult Mental Health and Palliative Care. Her interest in working with older people has drawn her back to her current conjoint position as a Clinical Academic Psychologist in Aged Persons Mental Health, Eastern Health and Deakin University, School of Psychology. Hema has various research interests which include evaluating psychotherapy techniques in functional disorders in the aged, enhancing therapeutic care in acute aged mental health units and reducing restraints and seclusion in inpatient units. Hema represents the APS Ageing Interest Group of Victoria as a Committee member and is the Chief Facilitator of the APS Canterbury Cluster Group. Hema has also been in private practice since 2007 and is currently the Director of a company Psychology 4 Change. Her other interests include classical Western and Indian music, spirituality and spending time with family and close friends.

STUDENT PROFILE



Theresa Scott completed her undergraduate study in Psychology at the University of Queensland. She is currently completing a PhD at UQ. Her research interests include older adults and positive ageing, and in particular interventions that promote quality of life in residential care facilities. Her PhD research examines the benefits of gardening activities for older adults residing in the community across Australia and also the benefits of horticultural therapy activities for older adults residing in aged care facilities in Brisbane. Theresa has been invited to talk about gardens and positive ageing at a number of events, including a guest spot on 612 ABC radio. She has presented the results of her research about the therapeutic benefits of home gardens and related activities for older adults at an international conference (IAGG) in Paris in 2009 and at several national conferences. Her interests outside of research include sailing and singing, and she enjoys cooking from her garden with her children.

Winners of the Ed Helmes Student Travel Awards

*Ellen Meissner
The University of Queensland*

*Fiona Millard
Dept Psychaitry, School of Medicine
James Cook University*

*Prapti Gautam
Centre for Mental Health Research
Australian National University*

Winner of the Elsie Harwood Award

Alexa Muratore, University of New South Wales

Predicting retirement preparation through the design of a new measure

Supervisor: Dr Joanne Earl

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Regular meetings of the State Interest Groups are held in Sydney (NSW), Brisbane (QLD), Perth (WA), Adelaide (SA), Melbourne (VIC) and Canberra (ACT). On occasion these forums are held jointly with groups whose interests extend into the Ageing arena. The Interest Group is also active at the National Australian Psychological Society conferences, with symposia and papers of interest to researchers and practitioners as well as those involved in the teaching and supervision of psychologists. Social activities as well as student opportunities such as research and travel awards are also available to members. Contact your local convener for details!