STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2015

The Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland
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WELCOME

The Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland (CARDI) is transforming the way we support, develop and translate policy-focused ageing research. In this strategic plan for the period 2013–15, we set out a framework centred on building capacity, co-operation and policy relevance and equipping the research community for a changing landscape.

Building on the success of our first strategy, we now concentrate on impact funding, leadership development and research translation. The development of a sustainable, effective, all-Ireland research community in ageing will be the main emphasis of our work. Supporting the development of next-generation leadership and assisting the research community to be ready for a more competitive environment in the future is key to CARDI’s vision.

CARDI’s underlying purpose remains to improve the lives of the ever-increasing number of older people in Ireland, north and south, by supporting policy-relevant research. This involves encouraging the use of high quality evidence to inform decision making and in turn produce better policies and services for our ageing population.

This is an ambitious strategy, requiring support from researchers, funders, policy-makers and the voluntary and community sector.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the steering group and staff team of CARDI for their time and dedication. We are grateful for financial support from The Atlantic Philanthropies, The Office of the First and deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland, and HSC Research & Development Division, Public Health Agency, as well as to the Institute for Public Health in Ireland for hosting CARDI.

We look forward to working with you.

Professor Davis Coakley
Co-Chair of CARDI

Professor Bob Stout
Co-Chair of CARDI
INTRODUCTION

This second strategic plan for CARDI sets out the direction for the organisation during the period 2013–15.

It has been developed within a changing and challenging economic environment and is informed by current developments in the field of policy, ageing research and wider factors that impact upon the lives of older people.

It is based on an extensive independent review of CARDI’s progress since 2007 and an assessment of how ageing research in Ireland, north and south, has progressed, and where it needs to position itself in the future.

The approach for this strategy will be to continue to work in partnership across sectors, borders and disciplines, but with a specific concentration on supporting capacity-building, co-operation and the utilisation of knowledge to inform policy and services relating to ageing and older people.
CARDI’S VISION
2013–15

‘The island of Ireland as a place of excellence in ageing research, contributing to the highest possible standard of life for our ageing population.’

CARDI’S MISSION
2013–15

‘To improve the quality of life of older people in Ireland, north and south, especially those who are disadvantaged, by supporting the building of research capacity, promoting co-operation, and communicating high-quality policy-focused research on ageing.’
CARDI’S PRINCIPLES & VALUES 2013–15

RELEVANCE
Promotion of research to advance older people’s needs and rights in Ireland, north and south and internationally.

FAIRNESS
Promotion of research that strengthens the rights, justice and social equality of older people across the island of Ireland.

RELIABILITY
Encouraging highly authentic, robust, high-quality and trustworthy research, in performance, interpretation and application.

INDEPENDENCE
CARDI is committed to independence, objectivity, quality and integrity in the research process and in the delivery of its work.

INCLUSIVITY
User engagement and stakeholder involvement inform the design, implementation and application of research.

ETHICAL
Research commissioning meets the highest ethical standards and procedures.
Today 1.1 million people aged 60 and over live on the island of Ireland; by 2041 there will be 2.3 million aged 60 and over – one-third of the population.

We are living longer than ever before and many of us are living healthier lives into old age, though this is not universal. Considerable health, social and economic inequalities have yet to be overcome to help us achieve a healthy, active and fulfilling old age for all.

Ageing strategies developed by governments in Ireland, north and south, increasingly recognise the need to broaden understanding of what it means to grow older. An ageing population brings implications for policy, service delivery and long-term planning in diverse areas such as transport, health, housing, education and employment.

The growth of our ageing population in Ireland, north and south, is one of the great success stories of public health and we must utilise research to take account of this demographic transformation.
### LIFE EXPECTANCY

Life expectancy at birth in the ROI (2005-2007) is 76.8 years for men and 81.6 years for women (CSO, 2009).

In NI (2008-2010), it is 77.1 years for men and 81.5 years for women (ONS, 2012).

### CARE SERVICES

In NI, 185,000 people provide unpaid care. 12% of these are aged 65 or over (DHSSPSNI, 2012). In ROI, there are 187,000 carers, 13% of whom are over 65 (CSO, 2012).

76 years is the average age of care recipients on the island of Ireland. 73 years is the average age of care givers for an older person (McGee et al., 2008).

2,833 extra people will require residential or formal home care each year in ROI between now and 2021 and 565 extra people in NI (Wren et al., 2012).

### AGEING POPULATION

Projected number of people aged 65+ (thousands)

- Republic of Ireland
- Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Republic</th>
<th>Northern Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2026</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2041</td>
<td>1397</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ROI (CSO, 2012), NI (NISRA, 2012)

### OLDER PEOPLE AND MONEY

24% of older households report giving financial support worth €5,000 or more to one or more of their children within the last ten years (TILDA, 2012).

9.7% of people aged 65+ in ROI are at risk of poverty (CSO, 2013) and 15% of pensioners are at risk of poverty in NI (DSD, 2013).

### OLDEST OLD

The number of 85+ year olds is predicted to rise from 89,600 in 2011 to 319,300 in 2041 on the island of Ireland (CSO, 2013) & (NISRA, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Centenarians</th>
<th>ROI (2011)</th>
<th>NI (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connacht</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leinster</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munster</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster (ROI)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster (NI)</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2011 89,600

2041 319,300

Source: ROI (Census,2011), NI (NISRA, 2013)
CARDI delivered a highly successful programme of work during the period 2007–12 which established the organisation and advanced research across the island of Ireland.

**OUR ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:**

**First all-Ireland collaborative ageing research grant programme**
CARDI delivered a highly successful all-Ireland interdisciplinary grant programme. Twenty-five all-Ireland research projects were funded by CARDI, including six which focused on data mining. Awards ranged between €2,000 and €85,000. The programme funded research in areas including health and illness (inappropriate prescribing; multi-morbidity); physical activity (falls, brain function); income and poverty (fuel poverty, impact of the recession); dementia (end-of-life care, medication); social exclusion (rural ageing, transport); care systems (a predictive model for long-term care).

**Communication and translation**
CARDI established an ageing research website which contains an online database of researchers; an e-library of over 3,000 publications, as well as the latest news, events and funding opportunities. CARDI produced over 150 publications, including grant programme briefings, monthly e-bulletins, substantial papers (e.g. A Picture of Ageing Research in Ireland) and resource documents (e.g. guidelines for writing policy recommendations). The journal Quality in Ageing and Older Adults published a special edition on CARDI’s work.
Commissioned research
Research projects were commissioned by CARDI in specific gap areas including:
- Theories of ageing and approaches to welfare in Ireland, north and south (Trinity College Dublin)
- Is increasing life expectancy also increasing healthy ageing? (The Institute of Public Health in Ireland).

Strategic partnerships
A range of strategic partners was established in this period: we worked, for example, with the Canadian Institute of Health Research (Institute of Aging) to establish an international exchange partnership for emerging leaders in ageing research, and supported Queen’s University Belfast to establish the NI Cohort on the Longitudinal Study of Ageing (NICOLA). CARDI in this period became a member of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics’ Global Ageing Research Network and also an associate member of European Research Area Ageing Network.

Networking
During this period CARDI held 40 events with some 2,000 attendees. These included an international conference on ageing research which attracted 400 national and international delegates from governmental and non-governmental organisations from 20 different countries.

Event partners included Strategic Promotion of Ageing Research Capacity (SPARC), Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, Changing Ageing Partnership, Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland, The Institute of Public Health in Ireland, NUI Galway, Irish Rural Link, Rural Community Network, The Age and Employment Network (TAEN), International Longevity Centre UK, KT Equal, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency NISRA, Queen’s University Belfast, Office of the First and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM), Trinity College Dublin, University of Limerick.
Ageing research in Ireland, north and south, is advancing and the spirit of co-operation across the island of Ireland is now stronger than before. However, developing and sustaining it further is a priority for the future.

CARDI will work to help sustain the energy that is now present for all-Ireland research. Within an economically challenging environment CARDI will support and encourage the ageing research community to focus on priority issues affecting older people. We aim to utilise and enhance skills and resources developed by established leaders in ageing research to help support future leadership in ageing research bring forward high-quality research.

In working towards making the island of Ireland a recognised place of excellence in ageing research, we acknowledge that this is not simply about producing research – it must be about impact. Effective communication is central to ensuring research has an impact on policy-making. By translating and highlighting the latest findings from high-quality ageing research, CARDI will encourage policymakers, politicians and practitioners to make better use of research.
DIRECTION

The direction of this strategy is building capacity, co-operation and policy relevance in ageing research.

The sustainability of existing developments in Ireland, north and south, will rest on foundations set in place in the period 2013–15. CARDI will move from funding and supporting to also informing and influencing direction. CARDI’s aim is to create conditions for greater sustainability within ageing research, to support the research community, and to increase its capacity and depth for policy and practice-orientated research work.

We aim to improve quality, accessibility, application and ownership of ageing research in Ireland, north and south. An underlying aspect of CARDI’s approach in this period is to bring user engagement to the fore, shifting the attention from traditionally understanding the needs of research producers (the academic community) to also focusing on the requirements of research consumers (policy-makers, service providers, business, older people and carers).

CARDI WILL CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR:

- an island of Ireland ageing research roadmap that sets out strategic priorities
- ageing as a key research theme by research funders in Ireland, north and south
- ageing as a priority research theme for universities across the island of Ireland
- greater utilisation of the results of research in policy development, service planning and advocacy.
Cardi STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2015
STRATEGIC POSITIONING 2013–15

IN THE PERIOD 2013–15
CARDI’S STRATEGY WILL CENTRE ON THREE AREAS OF WORK:

01 stimulating, supporting and developing strategic age research in Ireland, north and south

02 developing skilled leaders on ageing research across the island of Ireland

03 translating and communicating relevant research to help ensure it makes maximum impact on age policy and practice.
Stimulating, supporting and developing strategic age research in Ireland, north and south

Through this strategy, CARDI will deliver an interdisciplinary grant programme of applied research. It will concentrate in particular on the research theme of healthy ageing in order to bring greater attention and leverage to this policy area. This programme will have an increased emphasis on translation and communication to encourage higher understanding of the evidence base.

To help inform policy and service development relating to ageing and older people, CARDI will commission research in identified gap areas.

Collaboration and co-operation bring opportunities for both skill and knowledge exchange and utilisation. We will promote and support links between disciplines, sectors and across borders (Ireland, Europe and internationally).

The development of a sustainable, effective all-Ireland research community in ageing will be a core element of our work and will facilitate the development of an Age Research Network for the island of Ireland.

Developing skilled leaders on ageing research across the island of Ireland

Excellence in ageing research in Ireland will depend on identifying the right people with the right knowledge and skills, and supporting them with sufficient resources to develop and sustain their leadership.

A specific focus will be on the development of next-generation leaders in the field of ageing research in Ireland (both academically and professionally). To this end, CARDI will deliver a programme to support the development of future leaders of ageing research.

CARDI will continue to forge strategic links with key grant-making bodies, organisations and departments and the universities in Ireland, north and south, to help raise the profile of ageing research across the island of Ireland.

Translating and communicating relevant research to help ensure that it makes maximum impact on age policy and practice

Developing better intelligence for better decision-making and in turn improved policies and services for our ageing population will be central to our work.

Our strategy in this period is to equip policy-makers and advocacy groups with the latest evidence required to improve the lives of older people. We want ageing research to be more policy-relevant across the island of Ireland.

CARDI’s communication strategy will provide the policy and practice community with top-class information that can be used to inform policies and services as well as to articulate and advocate on behalf of older people.
GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

CARDI was established in 2007. It is a not-for-profit organisation developed by leaders from the ageing field across Ireland, north and south, including age-focused researchers, academics, statutory, voluntary and community sector representatives. It is hosted and gains its financial and legal status from the Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

The CARDI steering group has joint chairs (one from each jurisdiction) and its membership is composed of individuals/leaders from the ageing fields across Ireland, north and south: ageing research, academia, voluntary and community sector. It has one representative from the Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

The group approves CARDI’s vision, mission and annual objectives and contributes expertise and specialist knowledge as appropriate in bringing forward this strategy. The Director, Dr Roger O’Sullivan, leads the organisation and has overall responsibility for the activities of CARDI.

CARDI’s steering group:
Professor Davis Coakley, Co-Chair of CARDI
Professor Robert Stout, Co-Chair of CARDI
Owen Metcalfe, The Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Professor Eamon O'Shea, The Irish Centre for Social Gerontology
Robin Webster, Age Action Ireland
Dr Roger O’Sullivan, Director of CARDI

Evaluation and learning
Evaluation and sharing of good practice will be an on-going process that informs our work throughout the period of this strategy. It will be based on the guiding principles and strategic positioning set out within this strategy. After each key stage of our work, an internal evaluation process using self evaluation methods will take place. This will be supported by independent external evaluation.

Acknowledgements
CARDI’s work has been made possible with support from The Atlantic Philanthropies, The Office of the First and deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland and HSC Research & Development Division, Public Health Agency.