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Education and Training News:

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Enable Update:

Irish Evaluation Study of the ENABLE project

Data collection for Enable – a longitudinal study on technology and dementia will soon finish with a total of 32 Irish families having participated in the project. Each country has put together a National Report and a cross-country report is currently being drafted. It is interesting to note when comparing the Irish data to that of the other four countries (Norway, Finland, the UK and Lithuania) that we figure poorly in terms of income supports available to family caregivers. Irish primary caregivers also experience higher levels of stress when compared with our other European counterparts. Factors explaining high burden scores amongst Irish family caregivers are now being investigated. Five research articles emanating from the project have been accepted for publication. These papers address topics such as designing technologies, cost-benefit issues, quality of life, ethics and an evaluation of the Picturegramaphone – a clever CD Rom and computerised device, designed by a Finnish Occupational Therapist. If you would like more information on the ENABLE project go to www.enableproject.org. The final project meeting and conference takes place in Oslo in June and conference places are still available. For further information and registration forms please contact the DSIDC.

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**GP Study:**

The Centre, in collaboration with the ICGP, has recently undertaken a national survey of General Practitioners. This work is being co-ordinated by Maeve Clark, Research Assistant.

The specific aims of the study are:
- To address GP’s current diagnostic practices in relation to dementia
- To ascertain barriers to best practice in diagnosing dementia
- To investigate disclosure patterns in conveying diagnosis
- To examine GPs training needs in relation to dementia

A total of 600 GP’s were sampled and we are pleased to report that a high response rate – of 60% has been achieved. Postal questionnaires were well answered with much valuable quantitative and qualitative data generated. Data analysis is currently underway and some interesting findings in relation to gender issues, barriers to diagnosis, waiting time for services, tools used and tests ordered by GPs are emerging. A summary of key findings from this work will be presented in the next edition of this newsletter.

**Memory Clinic:**

The Social Work Service at the Memory Clinic is fully operational with the new Social Worker, Matthew Gibb, now in post over 9 months. Since his appointment, Matthew has been busy building up a client base, and looking after the social work needs of patients and their families attending the Memory Clinic. Matthew has also been involved in Extra Mural classes and in some of the Centre’s other Dementia related activities including the recent ERHA review of Mental Health services.

**Events Guide:**

The 14th Alzheimer Europe Conference will be taking place in Prague on the 20th – 23rd May 2004. Details can be found on: www.alzheimer-conference.org

The final ENABLE conference is being held in Oslo on 20th – 22nd June 2004. For further information on this project and the conference, please see: www.enableproject.org

The 9th International Conference on Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA on the 17th – 22nd July, 2004. Further details are available on: www.alz.org/internationalconference

The European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in association with PROCARE are holding an International Conference in Venice on the 21st to the 23rd October 2004 .The conference is entitled ‘Providing integrated health and social care for older persons - Facing the challenges in Europe’

Further information is available by e-mail. Contact: leichsenring@euro.centre.org
grilz-wolf@euro.centre.org
tel: Margit Grilz-Wolf on +43 1319 45 05 44

**What’s new from the research literature?**

“Assessment Scales in Old Age Psychiatry” (2nd Edition) – Alistair Burns, Brian Lawlor and Sarah Craig.

Building on the success of the first edition, the authors have compiled a comprehensive compendium of over 200 scales across the field of mental health problems in the elderly. Scales are accompanied by information on the completion of each instrument and a commentary to allow the reader see, at a glance, the scope of the scale and its application. The ever increasing number of older people being diagnosed with mental disorders, means that this authoritative guide is both timely and is an essential tool for everyone involved in assessing the mental health problems of the elderly and the effect that these may have on a patient’s functional ability. The book also has the added advantage of having an important contribution from Dr. Robert Coen, Neuropsychologist at MIRA.

“Isn’t an awful lot you can do to entertain them.” A study of the role and benefits of activities for people with dementia in nursing homes in Ireland – Avril Dooley, Thesis, MSc. in Applied Social Research. (Sept 2003)