***Towards Resilience in Family Caregiving for People with Dementia***

**Introduction**

Commencing in late 2015 and scheduled to be completed by October 2018, the project, funded by the Health Research Board is led by Professor Gerard Fealy, from the school of Nursing, Midwifery and Heath Systems. Care Alliance Ireland is the primary not-for-profit collaborator on the project.

The aim of the research project is to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of resilience and how family carers of people with dementia demonstrate resilience. The project is developing and testing a tailored Enhancing Carers’ Resilience (EnCaRe) resource for family caregivers of people with dementia, using a participatory action research approach.

**Funding, Partners & Research Team**

The host institution is University College Dublin (UCD). **Professor Gerard Fealy** is the principal investigator associated with this project. Professor Fealy is the Professor of Nursing and the Dean of Nursing and Head of School at the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Heath Systems. The following are also involved in the project:

* **Dr. Attracta Lafferty**; Research Fellow in UCD.
* **Dr. Amanda Phelan**; Head of Subject for Older People and Associate Dean for Global Engagement in UCD
* **Professor Eilish McAuliffe**; Professor of Health Systems in UCD
* **Mr. Liam O Sullivan**; Executive Director with Care Alliance Ireland
* **Dr. Diarmuid O’ Shea**; Consultant Geriatrician/Registrar with St. Vincent’s University Hospital/Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

The research team also includes a number of family carers who have been assisting the research team in understanding the stories and experiences of family carers with dementia.

**Sandra McCarthy** is the project manager of the study. She is supported by **Mary Forde** as a research assistant. **Kevin Deegan** is a research assistant, working on behalf of Care Alliance Ireland.

**Knowledge Exchange and Dissemination Scheme (KEDS)**

The focus of the KEDS project is to disseminate the findings to both academic and non-academic audiences, including family carers.

The primary aims of KEDS:

* Publishing the knowledge gained during the course of the three year project and also getting the information to the people and family carers who need it.
* Evaluating feedback from the workshops and using this feedback to further improve the EnCaRe project
* Distributing the EnCaRe resource to the family carers

In order for the dissemination process to be successful, we have been granted a KEDS award which we intend to use to organise six regional workshops throughout the country that family carers of dementia can attend and learn new information and also tell their own stories.

In partnership with **Family Carers Ireland** and **The Alzheimer’s Society of Ireland**; **Care Alliance Ireland** is responsible for organising the workshops. A discussion document will also be prepared aimed at practitioners, research and policy makers. There will also be a briefing document produced by Care Alliance Ireland, also available online and by hardcopy through Care Alliance Ireland which is targeted at interested parties such as family carers or academics.

**We need your help**

We are asking for your help in recruiting participants for these six workshops.

We are gratefully requesting that you can help spread the word in the recruitment process, given your respectful role as gate-keeper and as one of the leading organisations in caregiving. You would be responsible for informing potential family carers and families of the workshops and help publicise the workshops in order to recruit potential participants. In this, we would be very grateful and you will be given the credit you deserve in the final reports of the project.

Kevin Deegan, on behalf of Care Alliance Ireland, will be responsible in assisting you in this process in addition to providing you with up to date information and planning.

Mr. Deegan can be contacted by email kevin.carealliance@gmail.com or by mobile 085 852 9352. If you could forward Kevin’s information to any interested parties to register their interest in these workshops, we would be greatly appreciative.

**Who?**

The people who we are most interested in recruiting for these six regional workshops are family carers of people with dementia.

The aim of the workshops is to distribute the knowledge and experiences gained from the project, so other family carers can learn and gain access to a resource which may benefit them in the future. It is important that the workshops have participants from family carers of people with dementia.

As dementia impacts on the family unit, the recruitment process will also include family members of people with dementia. Alongside this, carers’ advocacy groups, dementia support organisations, health and social care professionals, as well as academics are further targets of KEDS.

**What is to be expected of the participants?**

In the workshops, the participants will be engaging with some volunteer family carers who have been involved with the EnCaRe project for the past year or so and will also be engaged in conversation about the concept of resilience and how it affects their own lives.

The workshops will enable family carers, who were not involved in the research project, to come together and discuss their experiences of resilience and family caring. In doing so, the project knowledge will be distributed across the country and will also benefit from feedback from the family carers.

Simply stated, the participants will be required to **engage with the research material presented** at the workshops, **discuss amongst themselves** the benefits and limitations of the project and also **give** **feedback** at the end of the workshops via a survey.

**Where & When?**

The workshops will be located around six different regions. The workshops will be located across various venues such as conference rooms, meeting halls, hotels, outreach centres etc.

The workshops are planned to run from September – October 2018. The workshops will be a single day event lasting approximately three hours, from 10:00 – 13:00. There will be food and drink at the meeting followed by lunch after the workshop.

The workshops will take part in:

1. **Dublin – The Ashling Hotel (September 4th)**
2. **Kilkenny – The Springhill Court Hotel (September 11th)**
3. **Cork – The Ambassador Hotel (September 18th)**
4. **Limerick – The Clayton Hotel (September 25th)**
5. **Cavan – Cavan Crystal Hotel (October 2nd)**
6. **Galway – Clayton Hotel Galway(October 9th)**

Reasonable travel and food expenses will be covered by the project, alongside any care costs that will be required.