



## Dementia Services Information & Development Centre

# DSIDC Annual Report 2007

The Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC) is a national centre for excellence in dementia and is committed to best practice in all aspects of dementia care.

We offers three core professional services

- Education and Training
- Information
- Research

This year many courses and training days were made available to staff providing services to people with dementia in many different care settings around the country. The feedback from these courses assures us that we are meeting an important need in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We have responded to the increased demand by putting on more courses and by undertaking training of trainers in dementia care.

Our information service provision demonstrated an increased interest in the needs of people with dementia in all sorts of settings. We were delighted to be able to respond to individual and organisational requests for information and to contribute to many networks and working groups.

Our research activities were strengthened with funding for a programme of social research on dementia. This initiative will contribute to the development of timely, responsive and accessible interventions for people with dementia, it will impact on policy development and contribute to the design of best practice models for those affected by dementia.

2007 also saw some momentous changes in which the DSIDC played a significant part and which will impact positively on the care of the person with dementia.

Events during the year included work with the Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) on the development of standards of care in residential care settings and the launching of the Northern Ireland Dementia Centre.

## Education & Training

The education function of the DSIDC continued to develop in 2007. The provision of a total of 80 separate courses or sessions meant that 113 education-training days were delivered to 1,274 participants in many venues around the country. This is the equivalent of 1,818 person days of education/training.

A breakdown of education/training days shows that the majority of days (896) were for participants who attended the one full day 'Foundation Workshop'.

Three 'Essentials in Dementia Care' courses were provided. This involved one full day of training per week for five weeks. The increase in popularity of this course represents a growing commitment by educational providers to focus specifically on dementia care.

Six 'Extra Mural' courses were held during the year. This involves one 2-hour session per week, held over 8 weeks. This course is particularly popular with the private sector. Participants from nursing homes attended four courses held in DSIDC and two courses were tailored specifically for individual services.

There were many enquiries regarding the management of behaviours that are challenging and training was provided to address this issue. A 'Train the Trainers' course was provided in March. A workshop entitled 'The Development of a Philosophy of Care' was provided on request. We also provided sessions on the MSc. in Gerontological Nursing for Trinity College, a cognitive assessment study day, a nursing symposium on dementia and a specialist seminar for Social Workers and Occupational Therapists.

## Information

Hundreds of queries ranging from staff training needs to advice on standards and from design to best practice in dementia care were handled. The expertise of DSIDC staff was sought on many policy and standards issues and led to membership on a variety of advisory groups, committees and networks.

Our 'Newsletter' was circulated to members on our database. A downloadable version was accessed by many on our website. The website was updated regularly throughout the year, detailing courses on offer and upcoming events. The site continued to be an important source of information for dementia practitioners and was widely used, receiving 17,244 visits during the year or an average of 1,437 visits per month.

Over 2,000 copies of the DSIDC service manual, 'Dementia, a Positive Guide' were printed and made available to dementia practitioners and individuals. There was also keen interest in our training Videos/ DVDs including 'Understanding Dementia' and 'Understanding Challenging Behaviours in Dementia'.

Many professionals availed of the library and resource centre where a wide array of ageing and dementia specific reference material, books and journals and databases were accessed.

# Research & Dissemination

The most exciting development this year was the news that a grant of €1.2m was approved by Atlantic Philanthropies to support social research on dementia. This, with additional resources from The Alzheimers Society of Ireland and Trinity College will allow the funding of 5 PhD students and a Research Fellow in Trinity College.

Research published this year included:

Farrell, A., Cahill, S., Burke S. (2007). Rural practice, dementia and Community Mental Health Nurse activity. In J. Keady, C. Clarke & S. Page (Eds), Partnerships in Community Mental Health Nursing and Dementia Care, 142-151, Open University Press, Berkshire.

Cahill, S., Macijauskiene, J., Nygard, A., Faulkner, J., Hagen, I. (2007). Technology in Dementia. *Technology & Disability*, 19 (2.3) 55-60.

Cahill, S., Begley, E., Faulkner, J., Hagen, I. (2007). "It Gives me a Sense of Independence" : Findings from Ireland on the Use and Usefulness of Assistive Technologies for people with dementia. *Technology & Disability*, 19 (2) 133-142.

Cahill, S. (2007). Thinking about dementia and rehabilitation: A historical perspective. *Les Cahiers de la Fondation Mederic Alzheimer*, 3, 20-25.

Cahill, S. (2007). Can technologies improve Quality of Life in persons with dementia? *Irish Ageing Studies Review: In Seminar Proceedings*. 1 (1), 45-53.

DSIDC staff participated in the following groups and networks:

- Ageing Well Network.
- Dementia Services Development Centres (DSDC) Network.
- HIQA Advisory group on Dementia and Standards in Residential Care Settings.
- HSE National Dementia Sub-Committee.
- Mallow Partnership Group.
- North Dublin Private Nursing Homes' Challenging Behaviour Group.
- North Sea Group.
- Northern Ireland Dementia Centre Advisory Board.
- Social Workers Special Interest Group on Ageing.
- Trinity Consortium on Ageing.
- Working group on Specialist Palliative Care for the person with dementia.



Dr. Suzanne Cahill, Director

## Speaking engagements:

1st International Conference, University of Stirling, Scotland, April, 2007.

Launch of Northern Ireland's Dementia Services Centre, Stormont Hotel, May, 2007.

17th Alzheimer's Europe Conference, Portugal, May, 2007.

Dementia and Technology, Northumbria University, Newcastle on Tyne. October, 2007.

## Committees

After long years of service, Professor Brian Lawlor and Professor Des O'Neill resigned from the Steering Committee. New members who joined Professor Bernard Walsh and Professor Davis Coakley on the committee included Professor Rose Anne Kenny who took over as Chairperson, Dr. Robert Coen, Dr. Elaine Green, Professor Robbie Gilligan and Dr. Greg Swanwick.

Membership of the Advisory Committee in 2007 included the Steering Committee as well as the following: Mr. Maurice O'Connell (ASI), Mr. Bob Carroll (NCAOP), Ms. Cathy Mawhinney (NI Dementia Forum), Dr. Donal McCafferty (ICGP), Dr. John Gibbon (RCSI), Ms. Julie Ling (DOHC), Ms. Mary Courtney, (IASW) and Dr. Mary Cosgrave (Beaumont Hospital).

The commitment and hard work of all our committee members is deeply appreciated.

## Staff

The services of the centre were provided this year by a total of five staff members. This including 4 full-time and one half time positions. An associate also assisted in the provision of training.

Orla Fagan returned from maternity leave to her post as Administrator in March.

Suzanne Cahill started a three year secondment to Trinity College in September to manage the psycho-social research programme. A recruitment process was undertaken to replace Suzanne and the position was offered to Patricia Hallahan in December.

## Contact Details



Staff & Associates in 2007

L to R: Maeve Clark, Cecilia Craig, Matthew Gibb, Orla Fagan and Deirdre O'Connor (Associate).

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If you arrange a visit to the resource centre, we can ensure a member of staff is available to assist you.