

GOVERNANCE, STAFF AND STRATEGY

Steering Committee meetings were held during February, August and November. Dr Odile Hally replaced Dr Elaine Greene while the latter was on maternity leave. New Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee were signed off by Professor Davis Coakley and Professor Rose Anne Kenny in December.

The **Advisory Group** met in February. This event was timed to co-incide with the Spring Seminar in which members participated. New Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group were signed off by Professor Davis Coakley and Professor Rose Anne Kenny in December.

The services of the DSIDC were provided by seven staff and a number of associates. PhD students on the Living with Dementia Programme contributed to education courses, ensuring that latest research findings reach practitioners quickly.

We were sad to say farewell to Dr Niamh Martin, Education Officer, who left to take up a position with the NHS in Scotland.

The strategic plan was used as a tool for monitoring and quarterly reports based on this were provided to the Steering Committee. This was reviewed towards the end of the year and refined for 2010.



Dr Suzanne Cahill, Research Director, DSIDC, pictured (third from left) with some of the participants at the **Ageing Research Advancements and Achievements, 2006–2009** seminar in Trinity College in July 2009. The group is (L-R) Mary Sutton; Professor Richard O'Reilly; Dr Cahill; Dr Brian Hoffland; Melina Ziegel; Professor Davis Coakley and Professor Rose Anne Kenny.



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promoting excellence in dementia care

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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. Established in 1998 by representatives of St James's Hospital, the Mercer's Institute for Research on Ageing and the University of Dublin (Trinity College), we operate from premises in St James's Hospital, Dublin.

Following a participative process with key stakeholders, which started late the previous year, we are delighted to announce that 2009 saw the implementation of our first three-year strategic plan.

Our strategic objectives are as follows:

- To promote an awareness of dementia to policy makers, opinion leaders and others by providing up to date and relevant information at individual, organisational and institutional levels.
- To enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of health care professionals and others who work with, or who provide services to persons with dementia by identifying needs and by providing the most appropriate educational response.
- To find out what works or makes a difference to the lives of persons with dementia by conducting and supporting action research and by disseminating findings.
- To ensure the relevance, viability, growth and development of DSIDC through the regular review of strategy and policy, increased resources and capabilities, good governance and management.

2009 saw a number of achievements particularly in the areas of promotion of awareness, education and research which we are delighted to share.



At the DSIDC Spring Seminar **Dementia Strategy Development**, February:
[above] L-R Professor Rose Anne Kenny, Chair of the DSIDC Steering Committee; Patricia Hallahan, Director, DSIDC and Maria Parsons, University College London;
[right] Dr Elaine Green and Professor Greg Swanwick.

PROMOTION OF AWARENESS OF DEMENTIA

We were pleased to be able to host two major events during the year, both of which were very well attended and evaluated.

Our **Spring Seminar** focused on the learning that emerged through the development of the Dementia Strategy, which was launched in England in February. This gave rise to much discussion among key stakeholders and contributed to the development of a submission from DSIDC to the Department of Health and Children on the National Positive Ageing Strategy, which highlighted the need for the development of a dementia strategy here.

The **Autumn Conference** was held in the Trinity Centre for Health Sciences and was attended by 155 participants, most of whom were health care professionals. It brought together many expert speakers on the theme of **Dementia and Rehabilitation – Challenges and Opportunities for Health Care Professionals** and proved a great success with 98% of respondents judging it to be very good or excellent.

DSIDC staff also participated in many **national and international networks** including the Ageing Well Network, The DSDC network, The North Sea Group, The Social Workers' Special Interest group on Ageing and others. Presentations were made at conferences and workshops including the North Mayo Dementia Care Conference and the Irish Hospice Foundation End of Life Forum.

DSIDC **newsletters** were produced in the Spring, Summer and Autumn and were disseminated widely through our e-contacts database which was also developed during 2009. Newsletters included articles on many aspects of dementia and information on dementia-specific events.

A new **DSIDC website** at www.dsidc.ie was developed and launched in March and is now widely used as evidenced by the number of hits received and by the increase in the number of queries in relation to dementia that are being processed by the centre.

DSIDC responded to many **queries** in relation to various aspects of dementia. We conducted **design consultancies** which enabled many organisations to enhance the experience of their clients with dementia by improving their environment. We were also glad to be able to refurbish our own library this year with new furniture and many new resources.

Progress was made on an initiative between DSIDC, the HSE and the Irish Council of General Practitioners on the development of a web-based dementia resource for GPs.



The DSIDC Autumn Conference, **Dementia and Rehabilitation** was held in November. Pictured L-R [above] are speakers Professor Ian Robertson, Trinity College Dublin; Valerie Twomey, National Rehabilitation Hospital; Professor Mary Marshall OBE, Stirling University; Professor Linda Clare, Bangor University and Patricia Hallahan, Director, DSIDC.

L-R Dr Robert Coen; Bronagh Flynn; Jackie Pool and Matthew Gibb.

EDUCATION

The **DSIDC Education Service** continued to improve and diversify during 2009. The first published Education Brochure was produced and widely disseminated by e-mail and in hard copy and was welcomed by our customers. This provided details of six different scheduled courses and information on how to access tailored courses designed to meet specific dementia education needs.

In 2009, 84 separate dementia-specific education or information sessions were provided. 1,458 individuals attended these sessions which resulted in a total of 1,239 person-days of education or training being delivered throughout the country during the year.

This represents 103.3% of the target for 2009 and an increase of 5.28% over the previous year. This increase was achieved despite a shortage of resources in many institutions, which limited funding for participants to travel to attend courses.

31 scheduled sessions and 31 tailored sessions were delivered to health care professionals in the public, private and voluntary sectors. These were held in various locations in Dublin and in 12 counties in the east, west and south of the country. 22 lectures, talks or seminars were given at various venues in Ireland and abroad.

A new course entitled **Activities and Life Story** was developed and delivered in the Autumn. The specific needs of community physiotherapists were addressed with a seminar designed for them in May. Work was done on the development of three new courses which will be delivered in 2010. An Bord Altranais approval was obtained or renewed for courses of relevance to nurses.

DSIDC staff contributed to the development and/or the delivery of dementia-specific education in a number of other organisations, including the Centre for Learning and Development, St James's Hospital, The University of Dublin (Trinity College) (MSc Gerontological Nursing and MSc Dementia) and the HSE Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units (National Dementia Training Project).

RESEARCH

The **Living with Dementia Programme (LiD)**, funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Trinity College, continued to deliver valuable research material.

Two additional PhD awards were made during 2009, bringing to four the number of PhD students now working on psycho-social aspects of dementia on the programme. Research undertaken to date has focused on

- quality of life and anti-dementia drugs;
- sheltered housing and long-term care for people with dementia;
- relocation to specialist dementia care units and
- reminiscence therapy amongst people with dementia in Ireland.

A Master's thesis, written on the topic of Memory Clinics in Ireland and detailing numbers, location, services offered and referral pathways, was completed in the Autumn. The findings from this work will be produced in booklet format for widespread distribution.

Three **Living with Dementia seminars** took place during 2009 with contributions from a number of international speakers. The first seminar was held in January and had a focus on Reminiscence and Dementia Care. The second took place in May and focused on the topic of End of Life Care and Dementia and the third seminar, on the topic of Self Neglect, Ageing and Dementia, took place in December.

Scientific papers from the Living with Dementia research programme were presented at several local and European meetings. These included the **New Insights into Ageing** conference held at King's College, London, papers presented at the **19th World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine** in Paris and posters presented at the Irish Gerontological Society in Belfast and the DSDC, Stirling University, Conference in York.