<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Ageing and Irish Social Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authors(s)</td>
<td>Quinn, Suzanne; Kennedy, Patricia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication date</td>
<td>2008-06-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>UCD Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to online version</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ucdpress.ie/display.asp?K=9781904558958">http://www.ucdpress.ie/display.asp?K=9781904558958</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item record/more information</td>
<td><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10197/9081">http://hdl.handle.net/10197/9081</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ageing and Social Policy in Ireland
Other social policy titles published by UCD Press

Contemporary Irish Social Policy
2nd edition edited by
SUZANNE QUIN, PATRICIA KENNEDY, GABRIEL KIELY and ANNE MATTHEWS

Care and Social Change in the Irish Welfare Economy
edited by BRYAN FANNING and MICHAEL RUSH

Irish Social Policy in Context
edited by GABRIEL KIELY, ANNE O’DONNELL, PATRICIA KENNEDY and SUZANNE QUIN

Disability and Social Policy in Ireland
edited by SUZANNE QUIN and BAIRBRE REDMOND

Theorising Irish Social Policy
edited by BRYAN FANNING, PATRICIA KENNEDY, GABRIEL KIELY and SUZANNE QUIN

Mental Health and Social Policy in Ireland
edited by SUZANNE QUIN and BAIRBRE REDMOND
Ageing and Social Policy in Ireland

edited by

Patricia Kennedy
Suzanne Quin
Contents

Contributors to this volume x
Abbreviations x

1 Introduction
SUZANNE QUIN AND PATRICIA KENNEDY 1

2 Constructions of ageing in Irish social policy
MARIA PIERCE 5

3 Ageing, the labour market and retirement
TONY FAHEY 20

4 Poverty and ageing
MARTINA PRUNTY 33

5 Housing and accommodation for older people
MICHELLE NORRIS AND NESSA WINSTON 49

6 Older returning emigrants
JOAN O’FLYNN 64

7 Ageing and the new communities in Ireland
JOE MORAN 78

8 Alzheimer’s disease, activism and the pharmaceutical industry
ORLA O’DONOVAN 92

9 Health care for older people
SUZANNE QUIN 107

10 Disability in old age
ANNE O’CONNOR 119

11 From community care to residential care: personal social services and older people
JOHN BRENNAN 130

12 Elder abuse
ANN O’LOUGHLIN 141

References 151
Index 168
Contributors to this volume

**John Brennan** is Principal Social Worker, Peamount Hospital. He is Chairperson of the Irish Association of Social Workers’ Special Interest Group on Ageing. He is a member of the Health Information and Quality Authority’s Working Group on the National Quality Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People. He has a background in hospital social work and since 1998 has specialised in social work with older people.

**Tony Fahey** is Professor of Social Policy in the UCD School of Applied Social Science. He was formerly Research Professor in the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). He was a lecturer in Sociology in NUI Maynooth from 1987 to 1992 when he joined the staff of the ESRI. He has carried out research on a range of topics connected with the family in Ireland and on older people, housing, demography and religion.


**Joe Moran** worked with refugees and asylum seekers in the public and voluntary sector for almost ten years. He currently teaches Social Policy at the Waterford Institute of Technology and at the Institute of Technology, Carlow/Wexford Campus. He studied at University College Cork, Trinity College Dublin, University of Liverpool and the Institute of Public Administration.

**Michelle Norris** joined the staff of the UCD School of Applied Social Science in 2005. Prior to that she was Director of the Housing Unit, an agency funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the City and County Managers’ Association. In addition she was a lecturer at the Department of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork and a Community Development officer in the Housing Department of Cork City Council.
Anne O’Connor is Disability Officer in Dublin City University. She has undertaken research in areas such as advocacy, quality of life indicators for persons with severe and profound disabilities and Daphne, a European project which explores initiatives to combat violence against people with disabilities. She has also been the Irish co-ordinator for the project: Advancing Inclusionary Practice in Post-Secondary Education in Canada and the European Union 2002–4. Anne was awarded one of the Ireland Canada University Foundation scholarships in 2004.

Orla O’Donovan is based in the Department of Applied Social Studies in University College Cork. Her teaching and research are centrally concerned with the politics of health and medicine. Much of her recent research has been focused on patients’ organisations and health activism, together with work on the politics of pharmaceutical policy.

Joan O’Flynn is a Programme Manager with the Combat Poverty Agency and previously worked there as Head of Information and Public Education and Editor of Poverty Today, 1994–2005. Prior to this she worked with the Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY), a London-based charity working to promote the needs and interests of Irish people in Britain.

Anne O’Loughlin is Senior Social Worker in St Mary’s Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin. Her social work career has been in the geriatric medicine service of North Dublin City and County. She was formerly President of the Irish Association of Social Workers.

Maria Pierce is a PhD student affiliated to the Social Policy and Ageing Research Programme, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin. Her doctoral thesis is examining the social construction of ageing in Ireland. She was previously on the teaching staff of the School of Applied Social Science, UCD. She has completed research for the Equality Authority on the intersection between ethnicity and disability, and on European and Irish gender equality, lone parents and social and information services at local level.

Suzanne Quin is an Associate Professor in the School of Applied Social Science, UCD. She has worked in St Vincent’s Hospital, the Eastern Health Board and as Head of the Social Work Department in the National Rehabilitation Hospital. She has also lectured in Social Policy in Trinity College Dublin and in the Institute of Public Administration. She has co-edited a number of books for UCD Press (including the companion volume Disability and Social Policy in Ireland (2003)).
NESSA WINSTON lectures in Social Policy at UCD. Her main areas of research are social policy, housing and sustainable development. She currently holds a Government of Ireland Fellowship for comparative research on sustainable urban regeneration. She has recently published in this area in the international journals *Social Policy and Administration*, *Local Environment* and *Social Indicators Research*. She has conducted a major review of Irish housing policy for the Irish Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. She is an active member of European Network of Housing Researchers (ENHR) working group on housing and sustainability in urban contexts.
Abbreviations

A & E  Accident and Emergency
AD  Alzheimer’s Disease
AGIY  Action Group for Irish Youth
BUPA  British United Provident Association
BURDIS  Burden of Disease in Old Age Network Project
CEO  Chief Executive Officer
CHD  Coronary Heart Disease
CoE  Council of Europe
CPA  Combat Poverty Agency
CSO  Central Statistics Office
DoEHLG  Department of the Environment, Housing and Local Government
DoSFA  Department of Social and Family Affairs
EANIG  Elder Abuse National Implementation Group
EEC  European Economic Community
EMEA  European Medicine Agency
ENHR  European Network for Housing Research
ESFEU  European Social Fund Evaluation Unit
ESRI  Economic and Social Research Institute
EU  European Union
FÁS  Foras Áiseanna Saothair (Irish National Training and Employment Agency)
GAIE  Gross Average Industrial Earnings
GHQ  General Health Questionnaire
HEN  Home Education Network
HeSSOP  Health and Social Services for Older People
HIQA  Health Information and Quality Authority
HRB  Health Research Board
HSE  Health Service Executive
IADL  Instrumental Activities of Daily Living
IAG  Independent Advisory Group
IAU  Irish Abroad Unit
ICCR  Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences
ICSFF  Irish Council for Social Housing
ILO  International Labour Organisation
IMF  International Monetary Fund
INO  Irish Nurses Organisation
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INSHQ</td>
<td>Irish National Survey of Housing Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INPEA</td>
<td>International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Institute of Public Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSDA</td>
<td>Irish Social Sciences Data Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAA</td>
<td>Living Alone Allowance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS</td>
<td>Living in Ireland Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRC</td>
<td>Labour Relations Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCI</td>
<td>Mild Cognitive Impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHSOP</td>
<td>Mental Health Services for Older People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMSE</td>
<td>Mini Mental State Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACPC</td>
<td>National Advisory Committee on Palliative Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPS</td>
<td>National Anti-Poverty Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCAOP</td>
<td>National Council on Ageing and Older People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCD</td>
<td>Non- Communicable Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCO</td>
<td>National Children’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDA</td>
<td>National Disability Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESC</td>
<td>National Economic and Social Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESF</td>
<td>National Economic and Social Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS</td>
<td>National Health Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE</td>
<td>National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OACP</td>
<td>Old Age Contributory Pension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODPM</td>
<td>Office of Deputy Prime Minister (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORAC</td>
<td>Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADL</td>
<td>Physical Activities of Daily Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES</td>
<td>Principal Economic Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHN</td>
<td>Public Health Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIAE</td>
<td>Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSI</td>
<td>Pay Related Social Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QNHS</td>
<td>Quarterly National Household Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIA</td>
<td>Royal Irish Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Retirement Pension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILC/EU SILC</td>
<td>Survey on Income and Living Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLAN</td>
<td>Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SONAS</td>
<td>Healthcare and Childcare across Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCD</td>
<td>Trinity College, Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCD</td>
<td>University College Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCHR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
xii

Abbreviations

VHI Voluntary Health Insurance
WGEA Working Group on Elder Abuse
WHO World Health Organisation
Chapter 1

Introduction

Suzanne Quin
Patricia Kennedy

*Ageing and Social Policy in Ireland* brings together the writings of specialists in a range of areas relevant to the situation of older people in Ireland. The overall subject of ageing and social policy is of current relevance and will remain so in the coming decades. This is because Ireland, like other European countries, is facing demographic changes and parallel policy challenges. The average life expectancy has increased quite dramatically in recent decades. The average life expectancy for a man in Ireland at age 66 is now 80.6 years while, on average, a woman at the same age will have a further 17.9 years to live. *Social Inclusion: Building an Inclusive Society*, the National Plan for Social Inclusion (Government of Ireland, 2002), outlines a vision for older people in which they are enabled to maintain their health and well-being, live active and full lives, independently and in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. It envisions older people participating in social and civic life, having sufficient income to support an acceptable standard of living, and having access to good quality services in the community, including: health, education, transport, housing and security.

As Pierce reminds us in chapter 2, there is a longstanding history and a close connection between ageing and social policy. She outlines how the origins of social policy towards older people in Ireland may date back to the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act of 1838, which was the first statutory provision for the poor in Ireland. This formed the foundation stones of Ireland’s social welfare system. Pierce argues that, as recipients of social security benefits and users of health and social care services, issues relating to older people and the problems of ageing and old age have moved on to the front line of policy debates in Ireland as in many other countries. Yet social policy as it relates to older people is not simply a response to the issues and problems of ageing and old age. The idea that the lives of older people and the problems of ageing and old age have been and continue to be constructed and reconstructed through social policies has been developed from a political economy of ageing which suggests that the experience of ageing is determined to a large extent by
socio-economic structures and policies. It has, however, been criticised for excluding the role of older people themselves, a theme which Pierce explores in detail. She suggests that older people are agentic – always actively constructing their social world.

In modern societies, Ireland being no exception, agency is often, though not exclusively, viewed in terms of participation in the labour market. Fahey, in chapter 3, utilises data from a nationally based research study (and) examines labour market participation of older people in Ireland and how this might be influenced by public policy. He concludes that older people are now being encouraged to remain in the workforce. This policy requires greater flexibility in pension arrangements and the development of options such as a phased approach to retirement, an approach favoured by the majority of older people in employment.

Labour market participation is very closely related to income security, a theme taken up by Prunty, in chapter 4 on poverty and ageing. Drawing on data from the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions, she emphasises the importance for older people of the role of social transfers in preventing poverty. She presents data on poverty levels for older people compared to younger age groups in four areas – income and income poverty, deprivation, housing conditions and consistent poverty. She focuses on some particularly vulnerable groups of older people before presenting a short section on the relationship between living conditions and health. Some of these issues are taken up in later chapters.

In chapter 5 Norris and Winston focus on housing and accommodation for older people, poignantly indicating that: 'Housing is not simply a “roof over the head” but it is also a location in which the person can foster social networks, family bonds and access services. So housing can have an immense impact on the well-being of older people.'

Brennan, in chapter 11, highlights the needs of older people who require help with activities of daily living. Today, the vast majority of older people in Ireland live independent lives at home. However, for the minority who require care, the reality of service delivery is such that funding for care services is below the European average (NESF, 2005: 5). As a consequence, personal social services in the community remain patchy, inconsistent and inequitable. There has been little attempt to underpin service provision with legislation. Brennan suggests that policy appears to be developed in a reactionary way and this ad hoc approach can be seen in the current Health Service Executive (HSE) moves to engage with the private sector via the new home care packages in providing community-based care services. The traditional mix of public, private and voluntary provision is thus further complicated because the roles and responsibilities of these sectoral providers as well as entitlement issues have not been fully clarified.
In chapter 9 Quin argues that good health is of crucial importance in old age as it is at any other stage of the life span, but for older people it is ‘the key determinant of their ability to remain independent and autonomous’ (Feldman, 1999: 272). She points out that many can now expect to spend between one fifth and one quarter of their lifespan within the category of ‘older person’. She highlights ageism in health care and the particular challenges of providing for the mental health needs of the older population. The fact that personal social services are subsumed under the health budget means that the provision of these services (of critical importance to many of the older old population) may lose out in multiple demands made on health care provision. There are many issues which need to be addressed by policy makers in this sphere.

Orla O’Donovan addresses the important role of the pharmaceutical industry in healthcare for the elderly in chapter 8 and she focuses on the importance of advocacy groups, using the treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease as a case study. The particular needs of other specific groups are addressed by several contributors to this volume. In chapter 12 O’Loughlin, for example, focuses on the emergence of elder abuse policy in Ireland. Looking at Ireland in an international context, she examines significant events and developments that have had an impact on the emergence of elder abuse as a social issue. She discusses the adequacy of responses to it as well as the challenges of developing preventative strategies in this area. Anne O’Connor draws our attention to the needs of another particularly vulnerable group of older people in chapter 10. With increased life expectancy, people are at risk of acquiring disabilities as they age. O’Connor examines the issue of older people who experience the late onset of disability, specifically people who acquire a disability owing to the ageing process. She also examines the needs of people who have had a disability since childhood, a group that are now experiencing longevity in much greater numbers. As with the general population, people with a lifelong disability are benefiting from improvements in medical and social advances, resulting in increased life expectancy (WHO, 2000). For some living with a lifelong disability, the onset of the ageing process can happen prematurely and bring with it the possibility additional complications.

Older people are not a homogeneous group. Many of the issues addressed in this book are intensified for older people from ethnic minorities and new communities, a theme taken up by Moran in chapter 7. He highlights the invisibility of older immigrants in terms of public perceptions, policy and service provision. Older immigrants, he argues, face problems in common with all older people in the population in relation to health and personal social services, poverty and housing, but their situation can be further complicated by language and cultural differences, lack of understanding and fear. He finds a lack of basic statistical data on older people among immigrant
populations in Ireland. Moreover, in his review of policy documents on older
people, only one (NESF, 2005) refers to the needs of ethnic minority groups.

In a similar vein, in chapter 6 Joan O’Flynn focuses on the particular
needs of returned emigrants, who though constituting a small number require
specific supports and services. O’Flynn indicates that return elder migration
has attracted less ‘scholarly attention’ than elder migration and there is limited
research and policy focus on the nature, extent and experiences of older Irish
return migrants. To address this lacuna, O’Flynn presents a short overview of
the current data trends relating to inward migration and older return migrants.
This is followed by an exploration of some theoretical explanations for return
migration before outlining key legislative and policy contexts and an overview
of the range of supports available to potential older return migrants.

This book explores many factors affecting ageing in Ireland today. It serves
as an appraisal of policy developments to date and as a point of departure for
future challenges. It is ideal for undergraduate and postgraduate students
eager to familiarise themselves with the challenges for older people, their
families, service providers, and policy makers. It introduces conceptual and
theoretical writings on ageing, thus will serve as a good resource for those
approaching gerontology for the first time. The book will be pertinent to a
range of training courses for social workers, psychologists, doctors, nurses,
care workers and any other groups employed in working with older people. It
will also be relevant to the vast array of agencies engaged in policy creation
and implementation in this area. Each chapter addresses a specific area of
social policy, forming a complete unit in itself. Taken together, the chapters
provide the reader with a readily accessible and wide-ranging overview of
ageing and social policy in Ireland.

The active participation and integration of older people in society are
important goals in contemporary Ireland. This book conveys the key role that
policy planning and service provision play in this area. The chapter contents
indicate that there are many issues in the areas of income support, housing,
health, and personal social services related to ageing in Ireland that must be
addressed in order to ensure that the aim of maximising opportunities for
older people to actively engage in civic and social life is achieved.