

# IAGG GARN News Release N° 2015-11

---

Toulouse, June 16, 2015

Dear Colleague,

We are happy to update you with the most recent actions setup by the IAGG GARN Network. It highlights IAGG's interest in older people's health and the need to promote research in many geriatric fields. With the assistance of appropriate specialists and with a few tools, research and implementation into clinical practice should be available in all health facilities around the world. We hope that these actions will raise awareness and help you implement them into clinical practice in your country.

## **1. The SPRINTT project (Sarcopenia and physical frailty in older people: multi-component treatment strategies)**

The SPRINTT project will create an opportunity to agree on the therapeutic indication, endpoints and Clinical Trial methodology which will allow the development of innovative treatments for Sarcopenia, currently an underdiagnosed geriatric condition. This will be the first non-competitive interventional European clinical trial in frail sarcopenic older patients using physical activity as benchmark for future studies with investigational drugs.

The five-year project is the result of a rich multiple collaboration between sixteen major research institutions in the geriatric field across Europe, such as the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (lead), Rome, Italy, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Toulouse, France, Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Prague, Czech Republic, Helsingin yliopisto, Helsinki, Finland, Servicio Madrilenio de Salud, Madrid, Spain, Universitaetsmedizin of Goettingen, Germany, Georg-August-Universitaet-Stiftung Oeffentlichen Rechts, Germany, Université Paris Descartes, Paris, France, Università degli Studi di Firenze, Florence, Italy, Friedrich-Alexander- Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Cracovia, Poland, Istituto Nazionale di Riposo e Cura per Anziani-INRCA, Ancona, Italy

See more on the project website at: <http://www.mysprintt.eu>

## **2. A message from Desmond O'NEILL, MA, MD, FRCPI, AGSF, FRCP (Glasg), FRCP, FRCP (Edin), FGSA**

Desmond O'Neill is a Consultant physician in geriatric and stroke medicine and Professor of Medical Gerontology, Trinity Centre for Health Sciences, Tallaght Hospital, Dublin, Ireland. His focus of research is rooted in gerontology and the neurosciences, with a strong emphasis on liaison with the humanities. He was Congress-President IAGG-ER 8th Congress, Dublin, 23-26 April 2015. <http://people.tcd.ie/doneill> <http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/category/desmond-oneill>



## **From gerontological science to advocacy: the mission of IAGG**

It is a major challenge to ensure that global policy initiatives for an ageing world are informed by the advances in the knowledge base in gerontology and geriatrics. Gerontological illiteracy is widespread, and it is therefore important that researchers who understand the opportunities and challenges arising from the longevity dividend find channels for influencing policy and attitudes in among decision-makers in national and international forums.

This particularly the case for global ageing, given that for some time now that the largest proportion of older people live in low and middle income countries where gerontological infrastructure and philosophy may be less well-developed.

A helpful example of one such initiative has been an informal coalition of gerontologists, geriatricians and advocates, many office-holders at one time or another in IAGG, led by Peter Lloyd-Sherlock of the University of East Anglia. The first initiative was to try to reverse the generally negative discourse on ageing in medical journals, through a joint letter to the *Lancet* (1).

The *Lancet* has an Impact Factor of 39.207, is currently ranked second out of 150 journals in the general medicine category, and has a strong interest in global health. The success of the letter was not only that it expressed a strong impetus in the mainstream literature for a positive approach to ageing but also that the *Lancet* chose the following phrase for the front cover of the journal, a 'first' for any general medical journal:

"Ageing is most often framed in negative terms, questioning whether health services, welfare provision, and economic growth are sustainable. We argue that, instead of being portrayed as a problem, increased human longevity should be a cause for celebration."

More recently, Peter brought the group together to express concern over the ageist nature of much of the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations (2). These biases matter because evidence exists from many low-income and middle-income countries that public investment has been channeled towards the existing Millennium Development Goal targets that are focused on maternal and child health and HIV, thereby reducing the available resources for other interventions, draining resources from services of relevance to older people—services that are already woefully inadequate in many countries.

This is of huge relevance, because older people have higher rates of common disorders that are amenable to prevention and management than younger people. A health-care system that gives adequate priority to older people would contribute more to the achievement of targets to reduce overall mortality and morbidity than a system that only focuses on younger people who are at intrinsically lower risk.

Further advocacy of this nature should become an integral component of the mission of the IAGG, with timely interventions to the major journals across the spectrum of science and disciplines associated with research into ageing.

1: Lloyd-Sherlock P, McKee M, Ebrahim S, Gorman M, Greengross S, Prince M, Pruchno R, Gutman G, Kirkwood T, O'Neill D, Ferrucci L, Kritchevsky SB, Vellas B. Population ageing and health. *Lancet* 2012 Apr 7;379(9823):1295-6.

2: Lloyd-Sherlock P, Ebrahim S, McKee M, Prince M, Ferrucci L, Greengross S, Gorman M, Gutman G, Kirkwood T, Kritchevsky S, O'Neill D, Pruchno R, Vellas B, A premature mortality target for the SDG for health is ageist. Lancet 30 May 2015;385(9983):2147-2148.

### 3. Upcoming meetings

**IAGG's 10th Asia/Oceania Regional congress, October 19-22, 2015 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.** The conference theme is “Healthy Ageing Beyond Frontiers” Expected contributions should be relevant to research, policy and practice under the main 4 themes: Clinical Sciences • Biological sciences • Behavioral and social sciences • Policy, planning and practice. Website: <http://iaggchiangmai2015.com>

**IAGG's 21st World Congress, July 23-27, 2017 in San Francisco, USA.** The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) will host this event that is held every four years. It will be dedicated to “Global Ageing and Health: Bridging Science, Policy and Practice.” Call for abstracts will be available on spring 2016 and registration will open beginning 2017. To be regularly updated, register on the IAGG2017 website <http://www.iagg2017.org> to receive their latest news and notices.

Best regards,

Constance de SEYNES  
IAGG GARN Executive Assistant