REPORT ON

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION ON AGEING

6TH GLOBAL CONFERENCE

27TH - 30TH OCTOBER, 2002

by

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OVERVIEW:

This conference brought together over 1,300 delegates from 27 countries to examine and discuss a range of issues concerning ageing.

It was a significant feature of the conference that delegates included researchers and academics, service providers from both the public and private sectors and a large cross section of those who would categorise themselves as “aged or ageing”.

The conference commenced on Sunday 27th October 2002 with a formal Opening Ceremony involving an Indigenous Welcome dance/music performance followed by a Multicultural Dance Extravaganza with representatives of numerous ethnic groups from Perth (e.g. Irish, Greek, Polish, Maori, Scottish, Japanese, Ugandan etc).

The conference proper commenced on Monday 28th October and each day the conference followed the same format:

Keynote address providing a thought provoking global direction for that day.

Thereafter participants broke into groups (at their own discretion) to listen to further speakers and/or become involved in panel discussion on a range of topics.

The major difficulty with the format was that, as a single delegate, I could only attend one session at a time. Most of the time there were at least 8 sessions running concurrently and sometimes as many as 11. So, throughout the conference, I had to select the topics I thought would be of most interest/benefit to me and simply try to get papers from as many others as possible.

Running as part of these concurrent forums were some areas in which I was interested but simply had to forego any attendance – notably “A Japanese Perspective on Ageing” and “Indigenous Matters”.
In addition, as a separate conference, but at the same venue and same time (and which delegates were invited to attend) was the “Universal Design Program” focussing on Research/Planning/Design issues for ageing persons and other disadvantaged groups such as the wheelchair bound – the idea being that we should design buildings in a way which is universally usable.

I generally focussed on the Streams/Themes of “Positive Ageing”, “Care and Support”, “Independence” and “Employment Education and Training”.

The list below (which excludes the Japanese, Indigenous and Universal Design Program Sections) indicates the range of papers presented/panel discussions on each day of the conference. I have indicated with an * those which I attended.

Monday 28th October, 2002

- * KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr David Suzuki;
- Cash and Care: Whose Independence;
- Sustaining the Well Being of Older People
- Population Aging and Old-age Income Provision: How to Adjust Retirement Systems and Labor Markets to cope with increasing life expectancy;
- The Case for Productive Work for Seniors;
- Independence Matters: Ageing, Poverty and Independence – Perspectives from the Developing World;
- Understanding and Living with Vision Loss;
- Global Ageing – Ageing Together;
- The Present and Future Role of National Aged Peak Organisations;
- Age Friendly Primary Health Care Centres;
- * Messages from the Market Place – What Mature Consumers in Australia Think and Want;
- The Recovery Process at Rehabilitation Wards in Geriatric Hospital;
- International Position on Ageing Facilitator: Hon Dr Cheryl Davenport;
- Hearing Services in Australia fro the Elderly Hearing Impaired;
- From Social ideology to System thinking; A Unique Experience in Providing a Service Network for the Elderly;
- Independence for Elderly Through Community-Based Systems of Care;
- University Study in Retirement – How Can It Contribute to Quality of Life?;
- Dedication Paying the Rent; A Place for Dedicated Education Units with the Aged Care Setting;
- Lifelong Learning: Making It Happen With Mala;
- Lifestyle Planning for Retirement – What More Can Be Done?
- Chronic Gliosis Triggers Alzheimer Disease-like Processing of Amyloid Precursor Protein;
- * Driving Performance and Dementia;
- Knowledge & Empathy The Key to Supporting Vision Impaired People;
- Functional Status of the Elderly and Support Required Among Community Dwelling Aged Persons in Hong Kong;
- * We will Remember Them – Focusing on Veteran Care;
- Corporate ‘Boomers’: Are they Prepared for Retirement?
- Building Bridges to Assist The Mature-aged Unemployed Person to Work in Aged Care;
- Public Libraries Response to Changing Demographics in Western Australia;
- Financial Support for the Elderly – A Study;
- Levels of Apolipoproteins in The Frontal Cortex of People with Alzheimer’s Disease;
- * Understanding Alzheimer’s: Skill in a Mundane Setting;
- Age Rejected – Not Prepared to Live;
- * Older Peoples’ Views on Quality of Home Care Services and How to Access These;
- Early Retirement: Practical Insights and Responses;
- The Geronic Nurse Practitioner: Developing an Innovative Position within the Aged Care Setting;
- Intergenerational Schools Community Training Program Combining Wisdom, Youth and Technology;
- Homeshare: A Model of Intergenerational Exchange Around the World;
- An Over-Reliance On ‘Gist’ Memory and a Deficit in Verbatim Memory in Old Age: Evidence from False Memories;
- * Cognition and Sensory Functioning in the Third and Fourth Age Women and Men: Evidence from the Australian Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ALSA);
- Longitudinal Study of the Qol of Post-operative Elderly Patients with the Large Intestine Cancer;
- Janaseva Foundation’s Day Care Centre – A Gratifying Project Offering Creativity Avenues and Dignified Life to Senior Citizens;
- Ageing In My Own Place – A Study of Home Care in the Asia Pacific Region;
- The Australian Employment Market and Older Employees;
- Older Workers – Can They Succeed in the Job Market?
- Mature Age Workers – Panel Discussion;
- * City of Joondalup Elder Protection Network – A Community Development Model for Local Governments;
- Healthy Ageing Through Activity;
- The Relationship Between Strength and Balance of Women Aged 40 to 80 Years;
- Research and Practice Development in Acute Care Gerontology;
- Maximising the Potential of Ageing in Place for Hospital-Discharged patients in Hong Kong;
- Delivering World Class Care for Veterans;
- Working Partnerships Ways Ahead;
- Peer Education Resource Centre – Linking Resources and the Community;
- * Identification and use of Case Factors in Decision Making About the Financial Abuse of Older People;
- Time Allocation and Social Network: Perceptions of Brazilian and New Zealand Executives – Now and in Retirement;
- Protein Markers in Early Onset Alzheimer’s Disease with Presenilin 1 Mutations;
- Cares: Committed to Assisting with Recovery after Stroke;
- The Retirement Village: A Community or Institution;
- Too Valuable to Waste the Australian Economy and Population Ageing;
- Lifelong Learning Partnerships That Work!;
- An Overview of the Responses to Elder Abuse in Queensland;
- What Do You Think Life Will Be Like During Retirement Years? A Cross-cultural Study;
- Becoming Old, Becoming Young? A Functional Perspective of Skeletal Muscle Across the Age Spectrum;
- Transnational Families and Elder Care From Afar;
- Veterans’ Home Care – Partnerships and Business with a Difference;
- New Roles for Carers;
- Pastime in CMIG – A Rewarding Experience for Elderly;
- Leisure and Later Life….An Australian Perspective;
- Older Workers in Britain: New Strategies for Recruitment, Retention, Retraining and Retirement;
- Factors Affecting Longevity;
- Social Support, Social Cohesion and Social Capital as Correlates of Neighbourhood Walking;
- Peak Experiences and the Ageing Process;
- Parents to Their Own Grandchildren; The Burden of Virtual Parenting;
- Assessment in Residential Aged Care Facilities: Is it Time for a National Assessment Form?
- Don’t Worry – Be Happy! Moving From Distressed to De-stressed;
- Do Seniors Want to be Employed? Are Senior Employable? – The Singapore Experience;
- The Older Baby Boomers: Redefining Retirement;
- Capitalising on the ‘Age Wave’ In the Workforce;
- Taking Control of the Future: Advance Care Directives in Nursing Homes;
- Stepping Out Safely: Pedestrian Safety for Older Persons – Results of the Baseline Survey;
- Drinking Patterns Among Older People in Rest Homes;
- Intergenerational Caregiving Amongst Adult Children and Older Parents: The Impact of Attachment Bonds;
- Classifying Community Care Clients. The Results of the West Australian Community Care Classification (WACC) Project.
- Carers Linking Project;
- Changing Attitudes Towards an Ageing Society – The Singapore Story;
- Working for Ages;
- The Next Phase for Ageing Workforce Policy for Australia;
- The Increased Longevity of People with Intellectual Disability: Implications for Health Care;
- Falls Prevention In Home Care Clients – A Needs Analysis;
Thai Elderly’s Working and Wellbeing;
Influencing Care and Support: Empowering the Client;
The Diversities of Social Care Providers Under the Long-term Care Insurance;
Poverty and Inner City Community Care: A Partnership Response;
Outcomes for Mature Age People Who left Employment in the Decade to 2000;

* Industrial Relations and Occupational Safety and Health Implications for an Ageing Workforce;
From Crystal Set to Cyberland: Third Age Learners and the Internet;
Receiving and Giving Help: Social Reciprocity in Singapore;
Income Sources and Productive Ageing Among Older Pakistanis;
Our Brain is Designed Primarily to Learn;
Depression and Social Isolation in Home Care Clients – Quantifying and Questioning;
Quasi-market of Long-term Care Services in Japan;
People not Patients, Homes not Hospitals: Sharing Aged Care Expertise Between Japan and Perth;

* Changing Demographics and Lifelong Learning;
Migrants, Refugees and their Ageing Parents Abroad;
Intergenerational Asset Management: Family Practices in Managing the Assets of Older People;
Primary Health Services for Older People in India – A Need for Quality Improvement;
Whose Matter is it Anyway?

* Identification of Strategies for Improved Social Support of Older Western Australians;
Social Endowment Security System should be Established in Countryside;
Health Workers I Private Homes for Elderly in Hong Kong: Their Health and Job Satisfaction;
Ageing and Disability: World Economic Trends and Employment Opportunities;
Design for an Ageing Population: One College’s Response to an Education Gap;
I’m a Senior: Why Should I Learn to Use a Computer?
Family Caregivers: A Two World Out Look;
Designing a Health Promotion Program for the Elderly Through Collaborative Action Research with Health Centres: A Pilot Study in Kanchanaburi, Thailand;
Impact of Eye Health on Healthy Ageing – Vision 2020: The Right to Sight;

* Valuing Longer Life: Lifelong Value;
Carer Training Project for the Management of Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (Bpsd) By Home-Based Carers;
From the Ground Up;
Economic Security for Australian Seniors;
Safety and Security at Home: A Partnership Between Health and Emergency Services;
Tuesday 29th October, 2002

- * KEYNOTE ADDRESS: The Hon Kevin Andrews MP
- Intergenerational Investment and Equity – A Sustainable Approach to Australia’s Ageing Population;
- Guidelines for Senior Friendly Marketplace;
- The Ageing Revolution – Liberating Our Imagination About Ageing;
- Policy Matter – What Role for Ethics?;
- The Ageing Disability and Health Care Interface;
- Viability of Aged Care in Australia;
- The Psephology of Population Ageing: A Campaigner’s Perspective;
- * Excellence in Service Delivery and Community and Aged Care Within Australia;
- Influencing the Research Agenda;
- “Where Do I Fit?” The Link Between Sense of Belonging and Psychological and Physical Wellbeing in Older Australians;
- * Development of Age Friendly Business Standards for senior Tourism;
- Dr Alexandre Sidorenko Chief, United Nations Programs on Ageing; Beyond Madrid: Time for Action;
- Separate from Positive Ageing Stream;
- Finding Greater Health, Balance and Happiness in Midlife;
- Ageing and the Arts: Rereading the Body in Decline;
- S-s-s-sexuality – Uniage Sex!;
- Pilates;
- Feldenkrais – Learning Turning;
- "Direct Link" – Closer than a Friend;
- Research of Sustainable Development on Population Ageing and Economic Social in China;
- Voices that are Heard: Partnerships Enabling Older People to Influence Policy;
- Effectiveness of a Walking Buddy Program;
- * Creating Age-friendly Communities;
- Ageing and the Arts: Rereading the Body in Decline;
- Older Italians in Australia and use of Health and Community Services;
- Challenge of Population Ageing in 21st Century;
- How Do We Motivate Older People to Volunteer?...Or is that not the Question?
- * Project Shape – The Senior Health and Physical Exercises: Evaluating Multilevel Influences in Promoting Senior Exercise participation in Community Settings;
- Achieving Endorsement as an ‘Age Friendly Hospital’;
- ‘Clustering’ A Flexible Residential Care Model for People from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds;
- Rural and Remote – Community by Candlelight;
- What Can Be Imagined, Can Be Achieved;
- * Positive Ageing and the Realization of Personal Goals During Retirement;
- Service Provision Partnership A Vision Australia Foundation/Australian Hearing Pilot Program Looking at the Benefits of Using Volunteers to support Vision/Hearing Impaired Clients at Home;
- Tai Chi Training, In Comparison to a Low-stress Physical Activity, and Self-rated Sleep Quality in Older Adults: Design, Rationale, and Methods;
- Campaigning With and For the Grey Vote’;
- Ministers Matters Panel;
- Community Care in Australia – Current Policy/Future Directions;
- * Planning for Later Life – A Community Perspective;
- Not Just Shopkeepers;
- Taoist Tai Chi: Promoting Health and Well-being;
- A model for Engaging Elders in Public Discourse and Decision Making;
- Minister Matters Panel (Continued);
- The UK National Service Framework for Older People: An Assessment of Effectiveness;
- Keeping Up Appearances: The Older Baby Boomers and Well-being;
- Cross Government Response to Reduce Social Isolation of Older People;
- Boomnet: Capturing the Baby Boomer Volunteer;
- ‘Healthy Carers’ Physical Activity Program;
- * ‘Tales of Times Past’ Intergenerational and Intercultural Oral History Program
- The Ahead-Australia Study (Asset and Health Dynamics of the ‘Old’ Old) Care Preferences of People 70+;
- Successful Human Resource Development Model in Home Care;
- Volunteer Community Coordinators and the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy;
- Stay On Your Feet WA – Embracing Volunteers, Working Together;
- The Third Age: New Perspectives for Social Development and Leisure;
- * Memory Changes in Health Ageing: Strategies Which Have Promoted Confidence of Older People in their Memory Abilities and Sense of Mental Health Wellbeing;
- Can Research Inform Policy on Ageing? Strategies for Bridging the Gap;
- Research Study Presentation Comparing and Contrasting the Situation Facing Older People in the Poorest Developing Countries;
- New Horizons – New Elderly Future Generations of Older People in Denmark 1987 and 1997;
- Increasing Levels of Volunteering Among Older Adults;
- * Building Older Peoples Capacity – Senior Led Community Based Programs;
- A Women’s Lifestyle Centre;
- The Economics of Labour Markets and Retirement Provision: Baby Boomers and Gender Differences in Australia;
- Alcohol use and Misuse Among Older People in the Community;
- The Interface of Research and Practice: The Role of a Research Unit in a Sub-acute Setting;
- Suicide Prevention and Older People;
- Working Together: Showcasing Australian Community Intergenerational Projects;
- A Simpler 8-form Easy Tai Chi for Elderly Persons;
- Diversity, Distance and Doing it Differently: Active Ageing for Western Australia;
- * Ageing in Place – What Factors Influence the Ability for Older People to Remain in Their Own Homes?
- Re-examining Elderly Suicide: What is Keeping our Seniors Alive?
- Partnership Matters;
- The Positive Role of Senior Citizens in Changing Society;
- Interventions to Address Social Isolation: What Works, What Doesn’t?
- * Social Implications Inherent in the Emergence of Aged Rental Villages;
- International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Inpea): Facilitating Global Exchange;
- Elder Abuse – A Western Australian Perspective;
- Mission Versus Margin…..or Can We Have Both? Red Cross Restructures its Volunteer Workforce to Improve Humanitarian Service Delivery and to Imbed Commercial Practices;
- Preventing Elder Abuse: Using Drama to Promote Victory Over Victimisation;
- * Organisational Change and Development in Residential Aged Care;
- Parenting for a Second Time: The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Grandparents in Thailand;
- * Debunking Myths: Giving Voice to Seniors;
Creating a Senior Friendly Community;
Beetroot for Breakfast (and Other Cures for Consciousness): Age, Habit and Spirituality;
Speaking Out;
Canadian Experiences in using Health Ageing;
Health Policy Matters: Chronic Disease Prevention and Healthy Ageing;
Conceptualising? Age-friendly?
Investigating Active Living of Thai Elderly Using Modified Instrument Across Cultures;
Health Services and Positive Ageing in New Zealand;
Rethinking Aged Care: A Community Perspective on the Challenges and Solutions;
* The Journalist’s Toolkit on Ageing – Helping Shape Media Perceptions;
Working Towards the Development of a Culturally Sensitive Holistic, Model of Community-based Care for Older People?
Older People and the Performing Arts;
Mission Armenia Non-governmental Organisation;
Ageing Policies in China;
The Home Independence Program – From Research Project to Service Delivery;

Wednesday 30th October:

* KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr Alexandre Kalache
World Health Organisation Policy Framework on Active Ageing;
The Gift of long Life;
Killing Me Softly: Ageing and Storytelling;
Aged Care in Africa;
* Accreditation: Towards a New Research Agenda for Residential Aged Care;
Individual Differences in Interpersonal Dependency in Older Adults: Development of a Measure and its Evaluation in Health Care Services;
* Dementia and Residential Placement: A Cares’ Perspective;
Older Refugees in Australia: An Exploratory Study;
* Falls Prevention Program - 3 Years On;
The Relationship Between Demographic and Health Related Factors on Dental Service Attendance by Elderly Australians;
* Treatment of Nocturia With Head Tilt;
Employers’ and Undergraduates’ Stereotypes of Older Workers: National Survey Results;
Medication Management: The Impact of Education Post-discharge;
The Licensed Club in the Lives of Older Men and Women: An Ethnographic Study;
* Hypothetical – Ageing: Opportunity or Obituary;
AAG Symposium Research on Ageing – Where is the World Heading?
“From Molecules to Population: The NHMRC Scoping Study on Ageing Research”;
- From Investigations to Policy: Research in Healthy Ageing;
- “From Local to Global and Back: The UN Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st Century”;
- Closing Ceremony.

The three keynote speakers who commenced each days’ session were exceptional.

**Day 1:** David Suzuki

The world renowned geneticist and environmentalist who spoke for an hour on world population/ageing issues. (He is now 66 years old). Unfortunately, I so thoroughly enjoyed his address I didn’t even try to take notes and there are no notes or tapes apparently available.

**Day 2:** Kevin Andrews Federal Minister for Ageing

Presented a really excellent address (again for one hour) entitled: “Intergenerational Investment and Equity – A Sustainable Approach to Australia’s Ageing Population.” A précis of this speech appears a Appendix I.

I have obtained a taped copy of this address (which constituents are welcome to borrow) as it contains very useful information and thoughtful propositions regarding how we deal with the issues arising from our ageing population.

I also understand that the Minister’s address is available on the internet at: www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2002/ka.

**Day 3:** Dr Alexandre Kalache

Gave an inspiring speech on World Health Organisation Policy Framework on Active Ageing.

Again, although I did not take notes and no précis is available I have obtained a tape of the address which is available for loan through my office.
PAPERS PRESENTED/PANEL DISCUSSION TOPICS

I have detailed above the range of topics.

I do have a 162 page book containing précis of most (but not all) of the above papers. Rather than copy them into this report anyone who is interested should simply contact my office and I will be happy to copy any for you.

I also obtained a useful reference book published by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (launched by the Minister at the Conference) with useful background information regarding:

- Australia’s Demographic Profile
- Social Context
- Health (and the Health and Welfare System)
- Aged Care

This book is available free from the Commonwealth Department.

I also obtained a similar book containing International Population Reports published in November 2001 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Commerce.

CONCLUSION:

It will be seen from the above that the amount of information and the vast array of ideas generated by this conference is simply too great to encapsulate in a report such as this.

Perhaps in overview it is worth noting that:

1. Already 12% of Australia’s population is aged over 65 years – and in South Australia it is already 13.8%;

2. By 2051 more than 25% of Australia’s population will be over 65 years and 9% will be over 80 years;

3. The increases in longevity over the next 50 years will be mostly attributable to better lifestyle/nutrition rather than medical technology advances;

4. To quote Kevin Andrews “Ageing is a journey, not a destination. It is a whole of life experience that affects us all.”
Whilst South Australia will clearly have significant issues to address as our population ages these should not be restricted to improving the life of those who must be institutionalised. Instead, we need to broaden our focus to the range of issues confronting the vast majority who are maintaining their health and independence and ageing positively.

Finally, I would be pleased to receive feedback from any constituents in relation to one of the papers I attended –

Messages from the Market Place – What Mature Consumers in Australia Think and Want.

In essence the research group, based at a W.A. University Research Institute, had conducted a two year study into the issues most important to “mature consumers” i.e. over 65 and not living in a hostel/nursing home environment.

Their research identified as the 4 most important areas:

1. **Financial Advisers:**
   
   Most concerns related to clear advice, confirmed in writing, clear disclosure of interest and a proper understanding of the financial needs of older investors.

2. **GP’s:**
   
   Most people were very happy with the service from GP’s but notably wanted:
   
   (a) a particular GP to be their doctor not just the ‘pot luck’ of an appointment with any doctor on duty at a large Medical Clinic;
   
   (b) appointments to be on time. This was a major concern especially for those who had to rely on other people to take them to appointments as they were then embarrassed by delaying that person when the appointment was late.

3. **Supermarkets:**
   
   Most enjoyed shopping generally as a social (not just a functional) occasion. However, a number of aspects of supermarkets could be improved to accommodate senior shoppers:
   
   (a) toilets;
(b) seats to rest on (particularly if one partner needs to sit down while the other does the shopping)

[I note that both (a) and (b) are already available in Stirling Woolworths Mall];

(c) provision of closer and easier parking not just for “Disabled” but generally for older persons;

(d) larger, more readable signs in shops and on shelves;

(e) better placement of products so that they are more accessible to people who are often losing stature and have no ability to reach high or bend low;

(f) packaged meat, fruit and vegetables in smaller lots suitable for one or two people;

(g) home delivery/smaller bags with less weight.

4. **Tourism:**

Unfortunately the study team focussed almost entirely on organised Coach Tours. It came up with a number of valid recommendations regarding toilet/meal stops, placement of passengers, activities etc.

However, in my experience far more of the 65+ age group travel independently.

In discussions after this meeting with a number of senior travellers I identified one of their most obvious concerns (and one which caused instant hostility when raised) was the ‘SINGLE PERSON SUPPLEMENT” whereby a traveller without a spouse or other travelling companion can be required to pay many hundreds of dollars extra for the same tour.
Appendix 1:

*Précis of presentation of Kevin Andrews Federal Minister for Ageing on “Intergenerational Investment and Equity – A Sustainable Approach to Australia’s Ageing Population”*

Each generation of Australians is challenged to renew the social contract upon which this nation is built. The prosperity and wellbeing enjoyed by Australians today is a consequence of the sacrifices and investments of earlier generations. Equally, the prosperity of future generations depends upon the decisions made today.

Australia’s population is rapidly ageing. These demographic changes will not be uniform across the country: there will be important regional, gender and ethnicity based differences.

The Australian Government is working to ensure that public and private expenditure on retirement lifestyles and health and aged care achieves fiscal balance and is sustainable for current and future generations.

Not only are we investing to provide for older Australians today, we are taking a *whole-of-life approach* to health and ageing to ensure that when our children enter retirement, they will be healthier and able to contribute productively, for longer.

The Minister’s presentation dealt with:

- the National Strategy for an Ageing Australia and the consultation with the peak business, financial, trade union and community organisations as well as the wider community;

- the Australian Government’s approach in bringing together interrelated policy work; and

- Australia’s involvement in the Asia Pacific region in relation to ageing issues.