A good life: developing a new quality of life instrument with older Australians for economic evaluation in aged care

The ageing of Australia’s population represents a significant challenge for aged care. New methods, techniques and evaluative frameworks are needed to overcome resource constraints while maximising the quality of life and wellbeing of older Australians. Economic evaluation offers a rigorous, systematic and transparent framework for measuring quality and efficiency, but there is currently no composite mechanism for incorporating the values of older Australian’s into the measurement and valuation of quality of life for quality assessment and economic evaluation. In addition, to date relatively few economic evaluations have been conducted in the Australian aged care sector or internationally despite the large potential benefits associated with their application.

Our recently funded ARC linkage project brings together research leaders from Flinders University, University of Sydney and Australian National University (ANU) with expertise in quality of life research, health economics, choice modelling, aged and dementia care policy and practice and five partner aged care organisations. Our partner organisations ECH, Helping Hand, Uniting AgeWell, Uniting ACT NSW and Presbyterian Aged Care provide community and residential aged care services with a coverage of five Australian states (SA, VIC, NSW, ACT, TAS). We will use state of the art methods, employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to develop a new quality of life instrument for economic evaluation across the aged care sector with older Australians. A particular strength of our project is its inclusivity. We will build on our collective research and practical stakeholder experience to incorporate the preferences of older people from a variety of care settings (including those with mild cognitive impairment and mild dementia, previously excluded from health economics research of this nature) in the development, validation and valuation of the new instrument. This new decision support tool will represent the first preference based older person specific quality of life instrument developed in Australia from its inception with older people. The instrument will have wide applicability in quality assessment and aged care system decision making, ultimately improving the quality of life and wellbeing of older Australians.

For further information and to register your interest please contact the project lead:
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