



**Dervilia Kernaghan**  
**Cancer Focus Northern Ireland**  
**Barcelona November 2017**



# Overview

- Introduction
- Context to the development of Well Aware
- Age Friendly Environments
- Barcelona - background context
  - aims of study visit
- Summary/ Recommendations



## The Age of Ageing

# Aging planet

World average



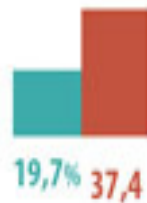
Japan



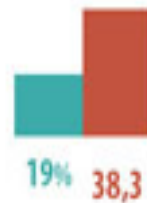
United Kingdom



USA



Russia



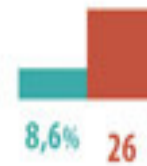
China



Turkey



South Africa



 % the proportion of people over 60 years (of the total population)

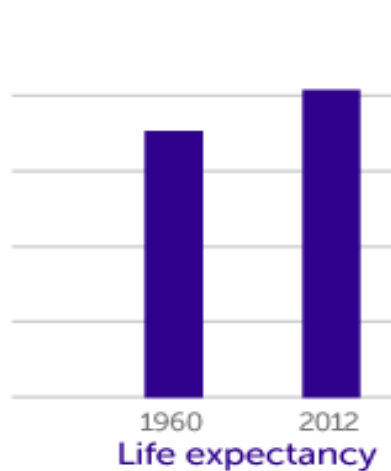
 years average (median) age of the population

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Data

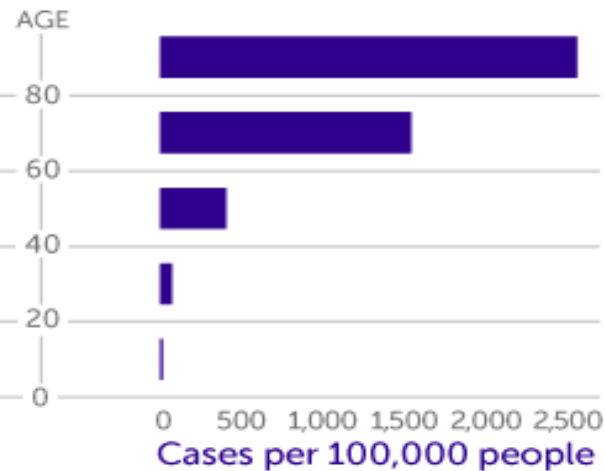
# Cancer and Ageing

## WHY MORE PEOPLE ARE GETTING CANCER

IT'S MOSTLY BECAUSE  
WE LIVE LONGER NOW...



...AND CANCER RISK  
INCREASES WITH AGE



**Source** :<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/incidence/risk/statistics-on-the-risk-of-developing-cancer#by>

# Cancer and Ageing

- A million people aged 60 and above living on the island of Ireland (rising to 29% of the total population in both NI and RoI by 2041) (CARDI, 2014)
- Life expectancy at birth in Republic of Ireland is well above the EU average yet 79% of the older population is either overweight or obese (TILDA, 2014)
- Most notably it is projected that the ageing of the Northern Ireland population over the next five decades will be the fastest in the United Kingdom (NISRA, 2010)

# Need for a Dedicated Campaign

Increasing body of evidence suggesting the need for a dedicated campaign to increase cancer awareness for older people:

- Cancer prevention – knowledge, attitude and behaviours of people in mid-life (Keeney et al, 2006)
- NI Life and Times Survey (2008)
- World Cancer Research Fund (2009)
- Cancer Research UK (2011)
- Measuring Quality of Life in Old Age – Professor Ann Bowling (2011)
- CARDI (2011)

# NI Context

- **Findings from NI Cancer Registry research in 2011 indicated that:**
  - One in three people with cancer over 70 is only diagnosed after admittance to A & E
  - 30% of cancer patients who died in hospital with cancer died within one month of diagnosis – and 93% of these patients were over 61 years old
  - *Recommendations from this report included the introduction of a major initiative to improve earlier recognition of cancer symptoms among both the public and health care professionals*
  - Nursing homes should be specifically targeted for training in early recognition of cancer symptoms

*( Blaney J. and Gavin A. Why Cancer Patients Die in Acute Hospitals: A retrospective study by note review. N Ireland Cancer Registry 2011)*



# Well Aware

- 5 year programme
- Big Lottery Funded – Reaching Out Connecting Older People Grant
- Partnership with Choices Housing
- Cancer Awareness programme focusing on over-60s & addressing H Inequalities
- Royal Society Public Health Award 2015
- Belfast Healthy Cities Award 2016

# Key Recommendations

- **Key areas to focus for the programme:**
  - Engagement with men
  - Older people with specialist needs such as cognitive impairment
  - Sustained awareness of breast cancer for women aged over 70
  - Smoking Cessation initiatives for 60+
  - **Exploration of ways to address loneliness and social isolation for older people**



## Age Friendly Environments??

# Study Visit Aims

The purpose of this visit was to gain an understanding of structures and approaches being used in a European context that:

- Provide public health information for older people
- Create and maintain age friendly environments encouraging positive health behaviours
- Initiatives that address health inequalities in older age
- Strategies which reduce loneliness and social isolation and promote resilient communities.



# Barcelona Profile

- Capital of the autonomous community of Catalonia of Spain and is the second largest city in Spain.
- **Population** – **1.7 million** within the city limits – urban area extends to numerous surrounding municipalities home to around 4.7 million
- Sixth most populous urban area in the EU
- **Ageing Population** – those aged over 65 account for more than 25% Barcelona population
- **Low birth rate** – fifth lower than Spain's average therefore increasingly 'top heavy' population model
- **Impact of economic crisis** on the elderly
- **Social Isolation** – 26% over 65's live alone



# Political Context – Catalan Independence?

October 2017



The Observer

## Catalonia crisis escalates as Spain set to impose direct rule within days

Spanish prime minister says Catalan government's powers will be returned to Madrid, as tensions rise between supporters and opponents of independence



November 2017



# Barcelona Public Health Agency



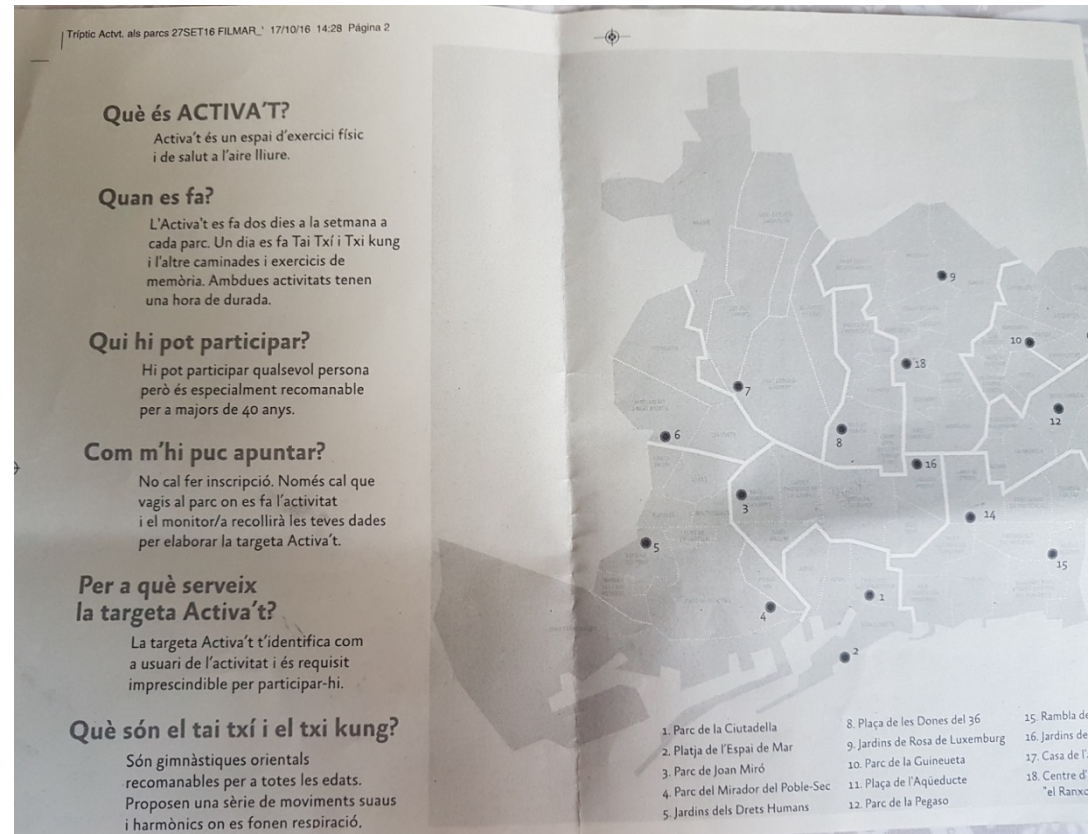
# Barcelona Public Health Agency OP Programmes

- 3 Programmes focusing on Health Promotion for Older People and addressing health inequalities:
  1. School for Older People
  2. 'Down to the Street'
  3. Activa't
- Addressing health inequalities one of the core aims of Barcelona PHA – programmes focus specifically on areas of social deprivation
- Issues include accessing old buildings, referral pathways – largely through primary care, access to transport & reaching those most isolated
- Importance of inter sectoral and partnership working



## Activa't

- Based in Public Squares and Parks across Barcelona
- Tai Chi and gentle walking exercises
- All year except August
- Open referral – 80% word of mouth
- Partnership approach between Barcelona Public Health Agency – City Council – range of neighbourhood agencies
- Addressing health inequalities in a focused way
- Physical activity as a means of addressing social isolation



# Activa't in action



# Activa't in action



# Holistic Approach

- Free at point of delivery
- Minimal cost to service providers
- Peer Led – activity leaders older people trained to deliver the programme
- Year Round
- Annual meet up with other Activa't groups
- Promotion of physical/mental/emotional wellbeing
- Encouraging social engagement and connection
- Intergenerational – grand children also present
- Importance of urban planning
- Issue of trying to engage with older men!



# University of Barcelona



# UAB – Health and Ageing Foundation

- Systematic Review conducted on interventions to reduce loneliness and social isolation
- Discussion around risk factors for loneliness and also screening tools utilised in Barcelona
- Specific project ‘Pathways from loneliness to social participation’ short term funding from a foundation
- VINCLES Project (‘Bonding’) – social innovation project designed to strengthen the social ties of elderly people who feel lonely and to improve their well being with the aid of new technologies – mixture of app based and social support – funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies – use of assistive technologies
- Age Friendly Barcelona since 2009 – first championed by Socialist government prior to economic crisis



VinclesBCN és un projecte d'innovació social que es crea per reforçar les relacions socials de les persones grans que se senten soles i millorar el seu benestar a través de la tecnologia i del suport d'equips de dinamització social.

**Dirigit a:**

Persones  
de 65 anys  
o més

Empadronades  
a Barcelona

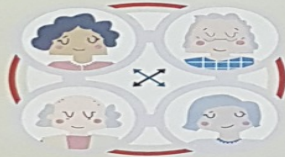
Amb  
sentiment de  
solitud

Amb  
ganes de tenir  
relacions socials  
actives

**El seu objectiu és:**



Reducir el sentiment  
de solitud de les persones grans.



Mantenir i ampliar  
les seves relacions socials.



Utilitzar la tecnologia  
com a eina de comunicació per  
relacionar-se amb el seu entorn.

**Com funciona:**

VinclesBCN permet enviar i rebre missatges de veu, de text, fotografies o vídeos, així com trucar, fer video-conferències i anotar les cites a l'agenda.

La persona gran es pot posar en contacte amb la seva xarxa de família i amigats, que es poden descarregar l'aplicació des del seu mòbil per comunicar-se.

La persona gran també es pot comunicar amb les xarxes de grups de persones usuàries de VinclesBCN i crear comunitats de persones grans que tinguin interessos en comú.



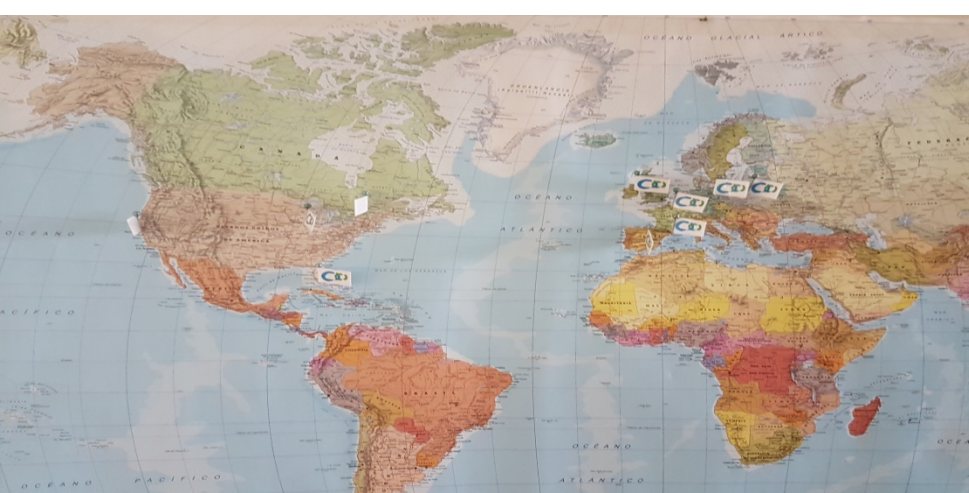
Ajuntament de  
Barcelona



# Amics de la gent gran – Friends of the Elderly

- Volunteer organisation that works to improve the quality of life of the elderly – mission is to fight solitude and social marginalisation of the elderly through the voluntary action and volunteers that support older people and raising public awareness.
- Active for 30 years in Barcelona – established network of volunteers – asset based approach working with older people
- Variety of activities including one to one befriending in individuals homes and nursing/residential care
- Well developed support and training for volunteers
- Involved with research projects mapping impact of loneliness
- Linked with wider federation across Europe (including offices in Dublin)





Fotografía: Nolvenn Legoff

Más de **380** personas mayores han celebrado Sant Joan. 14 Verbenas a todo color.



Fotografía: Paco Guirao

La ilusión de volver a disfrutar de la tradición en las **14 Grandes Comidas de Navidad**.

**SENSIBILIZACIÓN de la sociedad en contra del estigma de la vejez y a favor de la eliminación de la soledad que sufren muchas personas mayores.**

**Roses Contra l'Oblit** Comprando la rosa solidaria regalas compañía a las personas mayores que sufren soledad. Por Sant Jordi, más de **15.000 personas** han comprado y lucido una **Rosa Contra l'Oblit** de las personas mayores.



Fotografía: Laura Abad

Junto con Maria y Dolores, grandes amigas de la entidad, Nina y Albert Om han sido los embajadores de la campaña 2016.



Fotografía: Joelle Gueguen

La periodista Ana Boadas, amiga de la entidad, una de las miles de personas voluntarias y personalidades que se solidarizan con su **Rosa Contra l'Oblit**.



Fotografía: Pepe Zapico



Fotografía: Joelle Gueguen



Fotografía: Pepe Zapico

**Día Internacional de los Mayores** Hemos impulsado actos y celebraciones que defienden el valor de las personas mayores. Nos manifestamos con una marcha para combatir la soledad no deseada de las personas mayores.

"Las flores antes que el pan" es el lema de Armand Marquiset, creador de la asociación francesa les petits frères des Pauvres. Repartimos centenares de flores a personas mayores como reconocimiento y para mostrar nuestro apoyo emocional.



# Key Learning

- Strategies to address age friendly environments and social isolation well developed and evidence based and evaluated – developing approaches that address health holistically – not specifically just for loneliness
- Partnership working – importance of this working cross sectorally in a coordinated way –community/voluntary/statutory partnerships
- Taking the learning from existing work in the area – is possible to address in large urban environment
- Importance of strategic approach to addressing social isolation and loneliness
- Similarities – engaging with older men the same the world over!
- Political will – Influence of political set up on Public Health initiatives
- Intergenerational working – volunteers of all ages and peer approach

## A new age of ageing....

**‘...Our Society enjoys the presence of a healthier older generation. Cities that are more pleasant for the elderly are the most pleasant cities for everyone’**



# Thanks to....



For more information contact or to discuss contact:

***Dervilia Kernaghan***

Well Aware Project Co-ordinator

Cancer Focus

Tel: 02890 663281/ 07810371118

[derviliakernaghan@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:derviliakernaghan@cancerfocusni.org)

