The case for a knowledge exchange network (CAREN)

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THE CASE FOR A CARER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE NETWORK (CAREN)

Dr Mary Larkin,
The Open University
mary.larkin@open.ac.uk
INTRODUCTION

- **CAREN** - Carer Research and Knowledge Exchange Network’ and the rationale for its development

- http://wels.open.ac.uk/research-project/caren/

- a freely accessible knowledge exchange resource for all those across the globe who require any form of carer-related knowledge e.g. governments, carers, employers, policy makers, practitioners, researchers, NGOs and research funders around the world
PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- CONTEXT
- RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR CARER RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE
- CAREN
- EXAMPLES OF CAREN’s ROLES
- FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
- KEY REFERENCES
• now a wealth of national and international knowledge around the role and contribution of family carers BUT it is fragmented, disparate, lacks accessibility and utility

• this has significant implications e.g. in relation to supporting carers’ capacity to make informed decisions; achieving policy goals; maximising the value and impact of research
RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR CARER RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- International Carers Research collaborative network (using JISCmail).

- International Journal of Care and Caring

- Review of national and international carer-related knowledge
Carers Research collaborative network

Email discussion lists for the UK Education and Research communities
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Nancy Folbre, Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA

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Review of national and international carer-related knowledge

Carer research and knowledge

Utilising carer-related research and knowledge: a scoping review and information resource
adapted existing knowledge exchange models

transferred the items captured and coherently organised on Endnote during the review

used same organisation system as the review i.e. 62 themes classified into four major categories:

- Impact of care
- Carer variables
- Type of care
- Support and carers

DEMO - http://wels.open.ac.uk/research-project/caren/

webinars, online forum, Facebook, twitter, blog and podcasts
EXAMPLES OF CAREN’s ROLES

- a reliable and independent database for carer research and knowledge
- translation of research and evidence into evidence-based improvements in the quality and cost-effectiveness of both health and social care services and practice with carers (researchers, policymakers and practitioners)
- a source of information about policy development and evidence for government departments and NGOs
- the provision of information and evidence for carers, service commissioners, NGOs, policymakers and practitioners to support cost-effectiveness in decision-making and service development
- the facilitation of informed exchanges in relation to consultations and innovative practice (e.g. carers, NGOs and government departments)
- help researchers reduce duplication of effort, quickly acquire knowledge about existing research
- an ‘international noticeboard’ for promoting conferences and events
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- regular updating of resources
- extend knowledge exchange facility
- feedback and evaluation
- team to lead it (preferably international!)
- sponsorship
CAREN addresses a significant systemic deficit in the carers field

step change in the way carer-related issues are captured, disseminated and addressed

has the ongoing potential to improve the lives of the ever-increasing number of carers, by considerably enhancing the relationship between carer research and evidence and policy and practice

it is a network whose time has come!
KEY REFERENCES