THE CASE FOR A CARER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE NETWORK (CAREN)

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

Welcome to the Carer Research and Knowledge Exchange Network (CAREN)

- 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

- QUESTIONS and SUGGESTIONS
• 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
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 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
IN SUM……

- 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!
QUESTIONS and SUGGESTIONS?