

# Changing Age





# Vision and Mission

Newcastle University is a civic university with a global reputation for academic excellence.

We aim to be a world-class research-intensive university, to deliver teaching and facilitate learning of the highest quality, and to play a leading role in the economic, social and cultural development of the North East of England.

As part of the University's commitment to excellence with impact, we group and nurture a significant part of our research under institutional 'challenge themes' that address key societal issues. These themes address the demand-side of research by responding to some of the most pressing needs within society. Ageing has been designated as the University's first challenge theme, and this is being led by the Institute for Ageing and Health based in the Faculty of Medical Sciences on behalf of the whole University community.

The 'Changing Age' programme, taking place during 2009-10, will include a wide variety of events, designed to attract both regional and national interest. We see these themes as representing the whole University, including the student and the alumni communities, as well as key external partners, and hope that as many of you as possible will come along and join in the programme.

Professor Chris Brink  
Vice-Chancellor  
September 2009

# Introduction to the Changing Age Programme

Today, the older age groups are the fastest growing sector of the population, thanks both to past successes in increasing life expectancy, and ongoing research dedicated to helping more people enjoy a healthy and meaningful old age. But the prospect of growing numbers of people living longer than ever before brings with it new challenges for society, including the provision of health and social care, societal infrastructure (transport, housing), work and education.



The Changing Age programme recognises that population ageing is having an enormous impact on all aspects of life and society. Older people are extremely diverse in their individual needs and circumstances and they face particularly harsh challenges when it comes to securing equity within society. Nowhere is the need to address these challenges more pressing than here in the North East.

Our Institute for Ageing and Health is at the forefront of action to address the issues associated with an ageing population. A new Campus for Ageing and Vitality (above right) is located in the west end of Newcastle, an area home to a vibrant and diverse community, but also amongst the poorest parts of the city. The Institute hosts 'Years Ahead', a partnership of many organisations dedicated to making the North East a flourishing, sustainable region with a population older than anything experienced previously. Engagement with older people – especially in the research and policy-making activities which affect their lives – is at the heart of these activities and Years Ahead has recently been recognised by Government as the Regional Forum on Ageing for the North East.

The Changing Age programme is a celebration of the University's research achievements in ageing-related research over the last 40 years, but it is also a call to action. It is imperative that we create a lasting legacy of greater involvement in ageing research across the University and the region. Only by finding new ways of working together can we address the challenges of demographic change and improve people's lives. By doing so, we aim to establish Newcastle University and the North East of England as a leading centre for ageing research in the national and international community.

Professor Tom Kirkwood  
Professor Jim Edwardson  
Professor Nick Wright

# Programme of Events

Changing Age is a year-long programme of events aimed at stimulating new collaborations and activities within the field of ageing research that will cross the boundaries between scientific and clinical research, the arts and humanities and public engagement.



In the University, Changing Age will encourage staff within faculties, schools and research institutes to explore cross-disciplinary research themes and projects. At the same time, by promoting the University's expertise in ageing research and placing an issue which is set to continue to have a critical impact upon society high on the national agenda, the programme is designed to strengthen our links with the wider community.

The Changing Age programme begins in September 2009 and continues throughout 2010. **Activities include:**

## 2009

10 – 11 September

### Research Symposium on Embodiment, Subjectivity and Ageing

The main focus of this symposium will be social scientific research on what embodiment entails in the context of older age, experiences of the ageing body, and discourses (medical and non-medical) about such experiences.

18 September

### Interactive Research into the Needs of Old People

An event hosted by Newcastle Science City involving a panel of old people and examining their needs in terms of services and potential technologies. This is aimed at stimulating needs-based thinking to crystallise ideas for new research projects.

2 October

### Research Think-tank

A think-tank exploring new interdisciplinary collaborations in research related to ageing, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Brink.

15 October

### Literature and Ageing

Memoirs and Ageing: a six-week series of workshops exploring the writing of memoirs and the effect of ageing on memory. The focus will be on creative writing: how to capture memories; how to write a longer memoir; and how to make writing vivid and truthful.

16 November

### Teaching Think-tank

A think-tank exploring the inclusion of ageing-related topics in the University's teaching curricula, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Brink.

19 November

### Workshop

A one-day workshop exploring inclusive design and ageing, in collaboration with Northumbria University and the University for the Third Age.

## 2010

January (date to be confirmed)

### Foresight Summit

A one-day symposium addressing the issues involved in implementing the Foresight report on Mental Capital at a regional level. Organised jointly with Years Ahead.

11 February

### Public Debate

A high-profile public debate on the motion of 'This House believes that we should work until 70'. Confirmed speakers include Terry Rooney, Chair of the House of Commons Select Committee, and John Gridland, Deputy Director of the CBI.

February (date to be confirmed)

### Changing Needs – New Opportunities

An event exploring new business opportunities and markets arising from demographic change.

11 March

### Public Lecture

A public lecture to be given by Sir Michael Marmot, FRS, FRCP, FFPHM, FMedSci, Director, UCL International Institute for Society and Health and MRC Research Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College London.

12 – 21 March

### Events for Schools

at the Centre for Life.

Week beginning 6 September

### International Conference on Ageing, Disability and Independence (ICADI)

Newcastle University will host the well-respected international conference on ageing in The Sage Gateshead.

### Other Events

During the year, there are also plans to host visits to the University by three top international scholars, and to provide funded PhD scholarships for new projects related to ageing arising from the research think-tank. The University also plans to award summer scholarships to undergraduate students to work on projects related to ageing.

Early in 2010, the annual Holmes lectures for 11 – 16-year-olds will be on an ageing-related topic, and Science Week will include several participation events for local schools on the theme of ageing.

In May 2010, in collaboration with Northern Stage there will be performances of 'The Lion's Face' – an opera on the theme of Alzheimer's Disease, and there are also plans to mount an art exhibition on the theme of ageing.

The Changing Age programme will round-off with a celebration of 40 years of dementia research at Newcastle University.



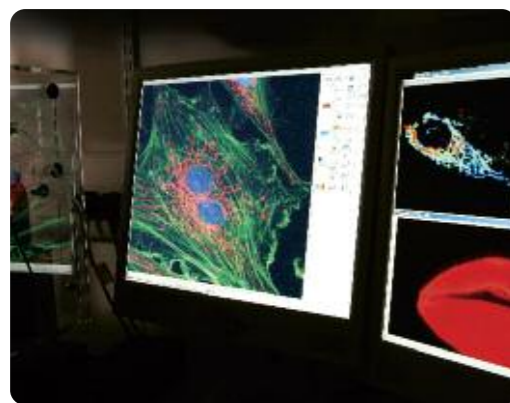
# Research

Europe's leading research institute in ageing, the Institute for Ageing and Health (IAH), was founded in 1994. Based at the rapidly developing Campus for Ageing and Vitality – a unique, multidisciplinary environment for research, training, business and public engagement – it brings together basic, clinical, social and computer scientists and engineers, as well as researchers in a variety of other fields, to address the increasingly important issues of:

- **how and why we age**
- **the treatment of associated disease and disability**
- **the support of through-life health, wellbeing and independence**

We pride ourselves on world-class research with impact. Our wide-ranging programme of investigation involves a core of around 200 researchers and postgraduate students, and attracts an average income from research grants in excess of £6.5 million per year. Much of that income is from competitive awards by national research councils.

Because of the broad multidisciplinary range of our work, a proportion of our research is undertaken within research centres and facilities led from, or strongly associated with, the IAH. In particular, much of our clinical research is undertaken in the context of the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre in Ageing. The IAH took a lead role in establishing the Centre, which provides strong research links to a broad range of clinical activities in local NHS Trusts. In addition, we host the Newcastle Brain Tissue Resource – a tissue bank where donations of post-mortem brain are stored.



## Research Themes

Our research is co-ordinated within six multidisciplinary themes:

- **Experimental medicine**
- **Clinical translation for patient benefit**
- **Biology of ageing**
- **Nutrition and oral health**
- **Ageing, health and society**
- **Technology for an ageing population**

The IAH is a major source of knowledge and innovation, with potential for translation into products or services to help everyone to age better and enjoy greater independence as we age. We work closely with the University's Business Development Directorate to support the commercialisation of research activity, but need to work with business and other organisations to translate our research into products and services.

We are always seeking industry partners to engage with our broad range of disciplines for appropriate commercial or collaborative research projects. We lead the Quality of Age Research Centre, with access to researchers from other universities within the North of England. We have also developed a panel of hundreds of people interested in ageing and age-related issues from across the North East of England, to support new business ideas.

The IAH can provide:

- **access to the latest scientific ideas and research leaders**
- **unique insight into the opportunities of demographic change and our ageing society**
- **multidisciplinary research capability**
- **access to representative public opinion about ageing and age-related needs**



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**Newcastle University**

Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU  
United Kingdom

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