



# Maximising workforce participation for older workers

Issue 1, September 2018

Welcome to the first newsletter in a biannual series prepared for stakeholders in the *Maximising Workforce Participation for Older Workers* research programme, supported by the MBIE Endeavour Fund.

This series will keep stakeholders up to date on the progress of the research programme and signpost new outputs from the programme. Importantly, the newsletter aims to encourage engagement from stakeholders in events held by the research team to disseminate findings and obtain feedback on how best make these available as resources for workers, businesses and employers.

## Project aims

The aim of the research conducted over the next four years is to answer a crucial question for an ageing population:

*How can government, organisations and workers support older New Zealanders' participation in the workforce?*

Researchers will review and conduct research to examine the needs and experiences of workers, employers, and entrepreneurs. Through consultation with stakeholders, contemporary communication and educational strategies, this new knowledge will be transferred directly to policy makers, employers, and older workers.

## Outputs, stakeholder webinar series and newsletters available online:

Research papers, presentations, evidence based tools, newsletters and webinars will be available through the Health and Ageing Research Team website [hart.massey.ac.nz](http://hart.massey.ac.nz) and promoted via the [@MasseyHART](https://twitter.com/MasseyHART) Twitter.

## Questions addressed by the Older Workers research programme

- How do the attitudes and motivations of older workers change with age and how do they influence workforce engagement?
- How can older workers, organisations and policy makers reconcile the work and care responsibilities of older workers?
- How can we support older entrepreneurs and Kauri mātua entrepreneurs?
- What are the organisational barriers to employment for older workers and what does organisational best practice for maintaining and enhancing older worker participation look like?

## Methods

The Older Workers research programme will draw on a range of new and existing research to address its aims. To examine factors influencing workforce participation of older workers over time, the study will access self-reported experiences of health, wellbeing, employment and employment conditions from New Zealand's longest running longitudinal study of older age, the Health, Work and Retirement study. It will also use qualitative interviews with people who are providing unpaid care while working, interviews with older people first starting a business after the age of 50, and case studies with organisations to provide a framework from which existing attitudes and practices towards older workers can be understood and informed.

The screenshot shows the Massey University website for the Health and Ageing Research Team. The header includes the university logo and navigation links for Study, Admission, Student life, Research, Initiatives, and About. A search bar is located in the top right. The main content area features three columns: 'Current programme of research' with a link to 'Older workers: Opportunities, challenges and projects', 'New Zealand Health, Work and Retirement Study' with a link to 'Labour report: The NZHWRS Longitudinal Study 2009-2016', and 'Research outputs' listing publications, policy reports, books, and seminars. A sidebar on the right displays a Twitter feed with a tweet from @MasseyHART about the longitudinal health profiles of older adults.

## Stakeholder engagement: a key aim of the Older Workers research programme

With each **newsletter** we will introduce key members of the research team who will bring their expertise to an aspect of the project. **Biannual live webinars** will be held by these researchers to share findings of their research, engage in a Q&A session, and consult stakeholders on the best methods for translating and disseminating these conclusions.

Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the webinar series to provide input into factors relevant to their area of expertise. Each webinar will address an area of key interest to persons representing or engaged with older workers.

### Live webinar events 2019-2021

Stakeholders will receive an email invitation to view and participate in each webinar in the series one month prior to each event. Other interested persons can contact the Health and Ageing Research team [hart@massey.ac.nz](mailto:hart@massey.ac.nz) to register their interest in participating in these events.

- **May 2019:** *Attitudes and motivations of older workers:* impacts of health, quality of life and job satisfaction on workforce engagement and withdrawal.
- **Dec 2019:** *Reconciling work and care:* impact of caregiving on workforce engagement for older people.
- **May 2020:** *Supporting senior entrepreneurs:* opportunities and barriers to starting business after 50.
- **Dec 2020:** *Supporting Kaumātua entrepreneurs:* opportunities and barriers to starting business after 50 for older Māori.
- **May 2021:** *Employer needs and practices:* conclusions from consultation with New Zealand organisations.
- **Dec 2021:** *Attitudes and motivations of older workers:* impact of ability to work, discrimination and workplace practices on workforce engagement and withdrawal.

### Post-event access to webinar series

Webinars will be recorded and available from the Health and Ageing Research Team website.

## Overview of project milestones 2017-2018

Since launching late 2017, the project has

- Developed, piloted and initiated a survey of over 4,000 New Zealanders aged 55+ on motivations, attitudes and workplace practices enabling and preventing their workforce participation.
- Launched a [report](#) detailing the association between physical, mental and social health of older people over ten years and their engagement in work and caregiving.
- Finalised protocols for interviewing older persons on their experiences of reconciling work and care-giving responsibilities.
- Developed protocols for interviewing senior entrepreneurs about the benefits and barriers to starting a business after the age of 50.
- Developed protocols for conducting case studies with large, medium and small enterprise on employer needs and practices with older workers.
- Identified working caregivers, entrepreneurs and organisations interested in contributing interviews and case studies.

**Report** launched August 1, 2018 on ageing in New Zealand from the first 10 years of the Health, Work and Retirement Longitudinal Study:



Dr Max Kennedy, Manager Contestable Investments at Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, opens the launch of the report in Wellington.



Dr Joanne Allen presents on the movements from work into retirement observed in the study cohort between 2006 when aged 55-70 to 2016 when aged 65-80.



Representatives from the HRC, MoH, MSD, Commission for Financial Capability, Treasury, Veterans Affairs, Office of Seniors, Volunteering NZ, Age Concern and Grey Power attended the launch.