

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Supportive Community Housing

Dr Emma Power of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology is examining a supportive community housing arrangement for older people requiring assisted home living. This research has been funded by UnitingCare Ageing Western Region.

'Safe and affordable housing needs to be provided for vulnerable older people who might require some assistance at home with daily living,' says Dr Power. 'In 2010 UnitingCare Ageing commenced an initiative that combines affordable accommodation with individually targeted support and care services. There is an innovative emphasis on developing the residents' social networks and community engagement as a pathway to healthy ageing. This is partially achieved by locating the self-contained units near a retirement village and church, as well as community shops and a local school. This pilot program will be examined to see how the governance and care components work in practice and whether there need to be improvements made to the current model of care. Special attention will be paid to the social connections and community benefits gained by the elderly residents living in such an environment.'

Focus groups and interviews will examine the experiences of case managers, care staff and the residents involved in the project. Through focus groups the residents' well-being after a year of residency will be compared to their living experience before, and just after moving into the community. The research will be guided by a steering group comprising the researcher, care staff and community care organisation regional managers.



Innovative, affordable and engaging community-based living arrangements for older people are likely to enhance their well-being and quality of life. Research findings from this project will inform future planning and delivery of affordable housing integrated with support and care services to give older Australians an affordable and enjoyable living environment.

Project Title: Examining innovations in aged care: affordable housing, healthy ageing
Funding has been set at: \$18,182
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September 2012