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Housing Wealth and Aged Care Policies Compared

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Highlight the unique feature of your presentation? (This will be used as a tweet in our twitter feed to promote your presentation): Local interest in ageing in the ACT as an 'age friendly' community

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Change and inertia in retirement housing development

Author/s: Kirsten Bevin¹

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Representatives of Australia's retirement housing sector claim a privileged position in the delivery of solutions to the housing 'problems' of an ageing, predominantly home-owning society. This presentation is an analysis of the way these solutions have been shaped, by a range of institutions, within a shifting context of social, economic, policy and property conditions. As well as historical and government sources, the research draws on in-depth interviews with senior professionals from the retirement housing sector in Victoria. It finds that solutions are influenced by the ways that this diverse group of institutions – from health, not-for-profit and property backgrounds – negotiate an idiosyncratic policy environment, changing urban conditions, and shifting approaches to care. Understanding the institutions, ideas, practices and systems that shape retirement housing can ultimately assist in considering how these options can be adapted or expanded.

Highlight the practical and/or theoretical implications of this presentation: The presentation contributes to understanding the conditions and ideas that have shaped retirement housing outcomes, and contributes theoretically to research that seeks to understand how ideas about housing and ageing are built into institutional arrangements.

Highlight the unique feature of your presentation? (This will be used as a tweet in our twitter feed to promote your presentation): Investigating taken-for-granted explanations of the development of Australia's retirement housing.

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Housing wealth and age care - Policies compared

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As populations are ageing in OECD countries, fiscal pressures are exacerbated as government aged care expenditure is expected to soar. These pressures are prompting debate on whether and how the financing of age care could be made a personal responsibility. In this paper we consider policy initiatives that would compel older home owners to draw down their housing wealth to make a greater contribution to the funding of their personal aged care needs. We begin by describing the motivation behind policy initiatives of this kind, before comparing the policy programmes that a selection of OECD governments are actively considering, or implementing and that rely on using the wealth embodied in the owner-occupied dwelling. While an understandable response to population ageing, these initiatives are representative of the increasing importance of asset based welfare in aged care. They pose challenges for intergenerational transfers, as well as older citizens' personal risks. While governments may be able to justify these approaches, actual and perceived features may pose obstacles to acceptance by older people and their families, especially potential heirs.