RESPECIALISING IN AGEING RESEARCH: A RETIREMENT JOURNEY. LAPSLEY, H, DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL PRACTICE AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND*Hilary Lapsley*

**Introduction**

My retirement decision has been to re-specialise in ageing research, after a career in psychology, mental health research and women’s studies culminating in a sideways move into research funding. An appointment to the Scottish Government’s Chief Scientist Office from 2007-2011 found me managing portfolios for ageing, dementia and mental health research, participating in developing national strategic research directions as well as funding research groups. Helping others with their research dreams was enjoyable, but as time passed I found I wanted to keep my own research skills alive. While in Scotland I began an association with a well-known longitudinal study of cognitive ageing.

**Research Summary**

The first of three papers, along with colleagues from the Centre for Cognitive Ageing and Cognitive Epidemiology at the University of Edinburgh, has been submitted to *BMC Geriatrics*. It presents qualitative research findings on the ‘start in life’ of 126 90-year-olds from the Lothian Birth Cohort 1921 (LBC1921) in order to contextualise the cohort and to contribute to understanding the relationship between childhood risk and resilience and healthy ageing.

**Future Directions**

Two further qualitative papers on LBC1921 are in the pipeline, the first on the ‘greatest generation’ looking back over their lives, the second on life today for the 90-year-olds of LBC1921. Retiring from the University of Auckland’s Research Office last year, I took up an honorary position with LiLACS NZ, New Zealand’s longitudinal study of advanced ageing. I hope to explore a range of topics with LiLACS data, including women, gender and advanced ageing. As an ageing baby-boomer, I would hope that my contributions to research on ageing will make a difference to the lives of my contemporaries as we grow older. I see superannuation as an ongoing research grant, giving me the opportunity of involvement in the exciting field of ageing research.

*I'm submitting it to the senior researchers' stream, although since it focuses on my own career, rather than a research group, I wouldn't require the full 20 minutes.*