

WHERL is a three-year
interdisciplinary consortium
investigating wellbeing, health,
retirement and the lifecourse

WHERL is an interdisciplinary consortium funded by the cross-research council Lifelong Health and Wellbeing (LLHW) programme under Extending Working Lives

The WHERL consortium will examine a crucial question for ageing societies: How inequalities across the lifecourse relate to paid work in later life in the UK.

Our main aim is to investigate lifecourse influences on later life work trajectories and the implications for health and wellbeing of working up to and beyond the state pension age.

The project builds on an existing UK-Canadian collaboration examining lifecourse influences on later life work trajectories across several European countries and the US.

WHERL is led by the **Institute of Gerontology at King's College London** in partnership with:

- Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London
- Epidemiology & Public Health at University College London
- Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto
- Pensions Policy Institute (PPI)
- Age UK
- UK Department for Work and Pensions.

Research themes

- Using a wide variety of complex large scale datasets, our interdisciplinary team will be tackling projects that cover three major areas:
- i) a comprehensive assessment of lifecourse determinants and consequences for health and wellbeing of working up to and beyond the state pension age;
- ii) an evaluation of whether (and how) these relationships have changed for different cohorts and over time; and
- iii) modelling of the financial consequences of working up to and beyond the state pension age for those with different lifecourse trajectories.

Research questions

- How work and family histories influence who works for pay until or beyond SPA? How does this vary by gender and social class? How has working in later life changed across cohorts?
- How does working later in life relate to health in the UK? Does this relationship differ according to individuals' earlier work and family histories? Has this relationship changed across cohorts?
- In the UK, how does working later in life influence projections of income in retirement? Is the financial impact of late career work affected by individuals' earlier work and family histories? Has the impact of earlier work and family histories on retirement income changed across cohorts in the UK?

Project structure

Employment status & mental health in later life at the *Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London*

Creation of marriage, fertility & labour market histories at *King's College London and the University of Toronto*



Health in retirement at *University College London and King's College London*

Financial wellbeing in retirement with the *Pensions Policy Institute*

Cohort changes in retirement timing at *King's College London*

Partner project: Labour market trajectories in later life (international comparison) with the *University of Toronto*

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Creation of marriage, fertility and labour market histories



- Aim is to summarise and describe individuals' long-term biographies for use in subsequent work packages.
- Using data from the British Household Panel Survey, the British Retirement Survey and the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing.
- Annual state in each domain over adult working life (16–55 years):
 - **Labour Market Involvement:** Full-time and self-employment / Part-time / Not in paid work
 - **Marital Status:** Married / Not married
 - **Fertility (number of children <16 years):** 0 / 1 / 2 / 3+
- First work package, due for completion in March 2015.

Research team: King's College London: Karen Glaser, Debora Price, Laurie Corna, Loretta Platts, Rachel Stuchbury, Lawrence Sacco, Giorgio di Gessa.

University College London: Amanda Sacker, Rebecca Benson.

University of Toronto: Peggy McDonough, Diana Worts.



Classifying individual histories



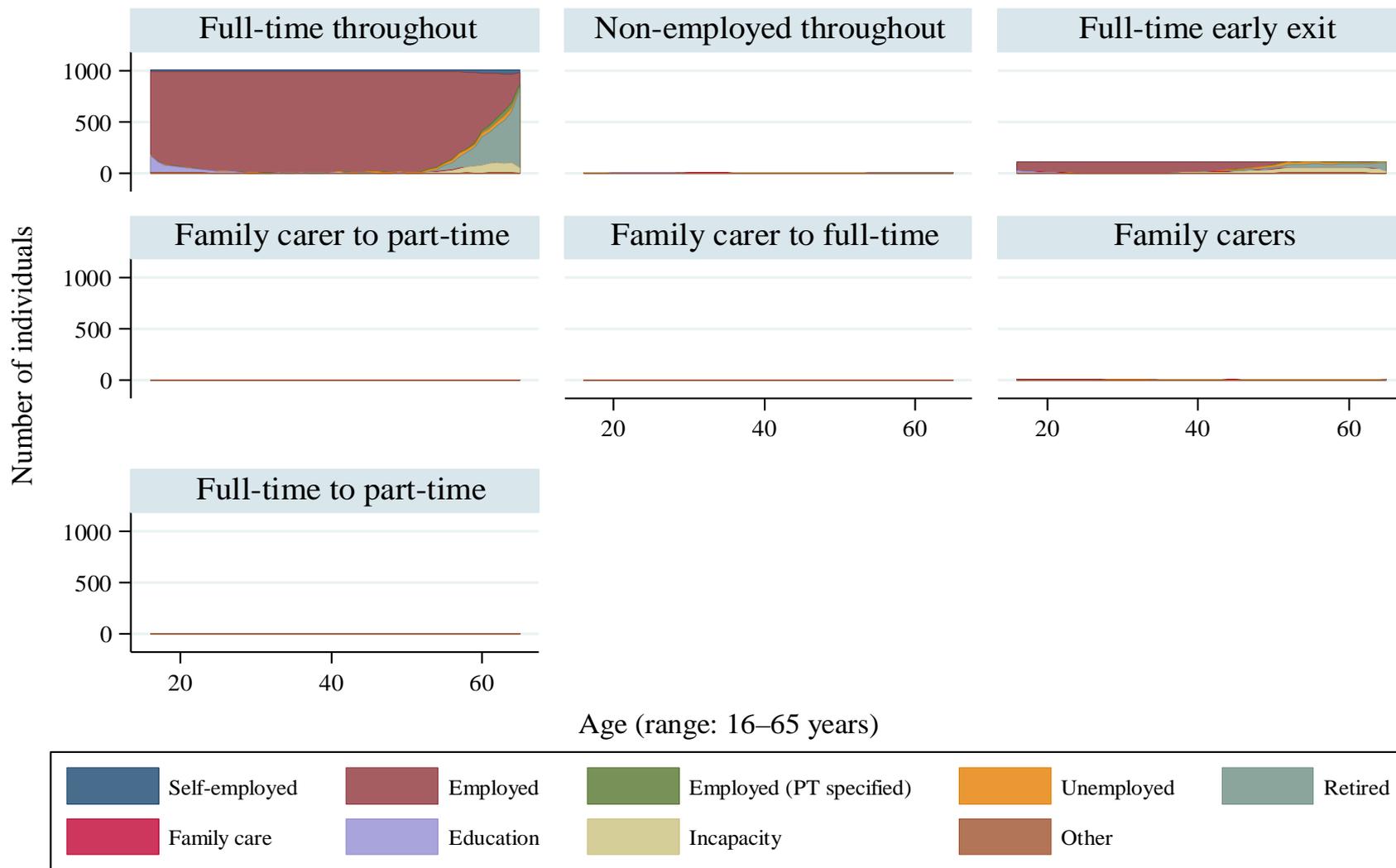
- For three different British datasets...
- ... generate year-by-year work, marital and fertility histories for participants born 1920–1945.
- Group each set of histories according to frequent and meaningful patterns with the help of “model” or “synthetic” sequences.
- Classify participants according to the work, marital and fertility synthetic histories they match most closely in each domain.
- The final result for one participant could be that their work, marital and fertility history was classified as: “full-time work”, being “married throughout” and having had “one child early”.

Research team:

King's College London: Karen Glaser, Debora Price, Laurie Corna,
Loretta Platts, Rachel Stuchbury, Lawrence Sacco, Giorgio di Gessa.
University of Toronto: Peggy McDonough, Diana Worts.



Male work histories



Graphs of labour market histories organized by their nearest synthetic type.

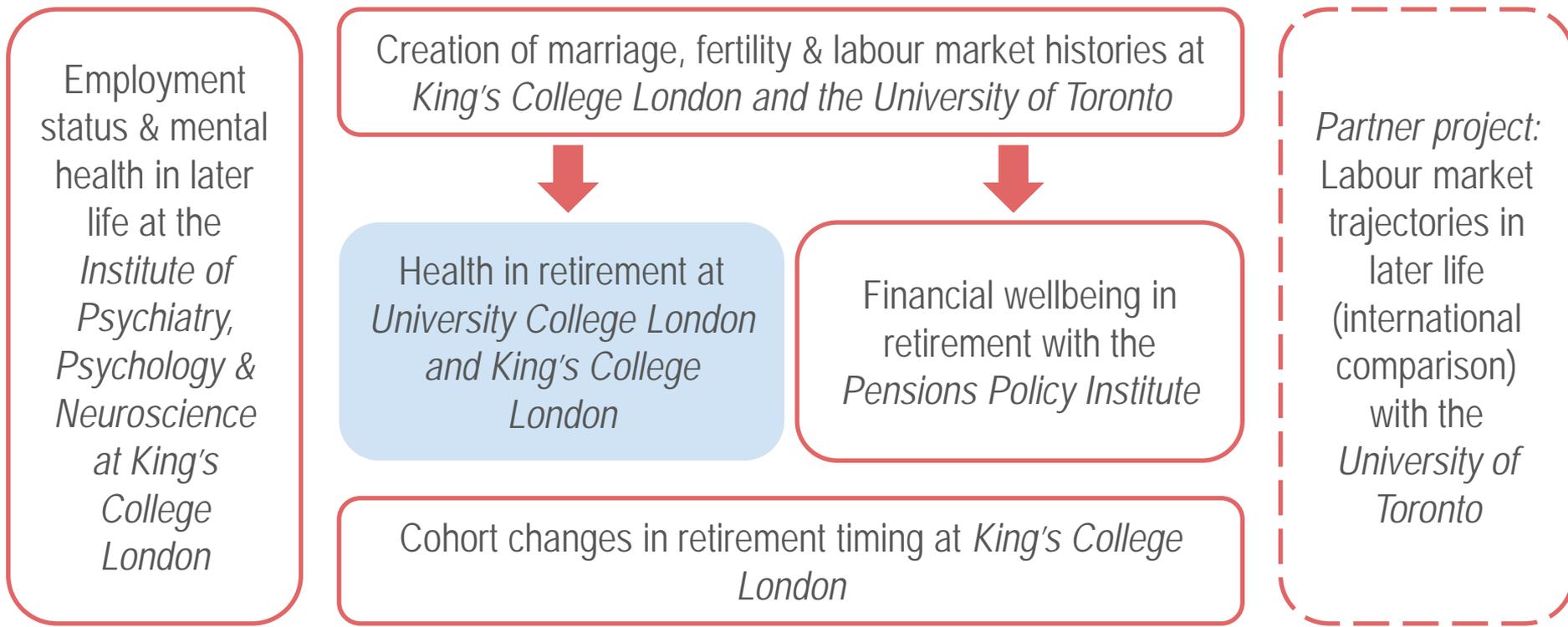
Female work histories



Graphs of labour market histories organized by their nearest synthetic type.



Health and wellbeing



Working beyond SPA and health and wellbeing



- Aim is to investigate how paid work until or beyond SPA influences health and wellbeing and whether this relationship has changed across cohorts.
- Using data from the British Household Panel Survey, the British Retirement Survey and the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing.
- Self-report and biomarker data
 - General health, long-standing illness, ADLs/IADLs, chronic conditions (latent variable for somatic health: self-rated health, long-term illness, chronic lung disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer; ADLs and IADLs).
 - Biomarker data: height & weight, waist circumference, % body fat, respiratory function, Blood pressure, grip strength, chair lift , blood analytes (UKHLS, ELSA).
 - CES-D, GHQ12.

Research team:

King's College London: Karen Glaser, Debora Price, Laurie Corna, Loretta Platts, Rachel Stuchbury, Lawrence Sacco, Giorgio di Gessa.

UCL: Amanda Sacker, Rebecca Benson.



Psychological health

Employment status & mental health in later life at the *Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London*

Creation of marriage, fertility & labour market histories at *King's College London and the University of Toronto*



Health in retirement at *University College London and King's College London*

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Partner project: Labour market trajectories in later life (international comparison) with the *University of Toronto*

Working beyond SPA and psychological health



- Aim is to address changes in relationship between employment status, adverse life events and psychological health.
- Using ONS Psychiatric Morbidity Surveys: 1993, 2000, 2007.
- Detailed psychological measures: Revised Clinical Interview Schedule (e.g. depression, anxiety, sleeplessness etc.), physical health, ADLs, cognitive function.
- Measure of stressful life events (e.g. serious illness, redundancy)
- 55–64 years using all three surveys and 55–69 years for more recent surveys.

Research team:

King's College London: Karen Glaser, Debora Price, Laurie Corna, Loretta Platts, Rachel Stuchbury, Lawrence Sacco, Giorgio di Gessa.
IoPPN: Rob Stewart, Gayan Perera.



Financial wellbeing

Employment status & mental health in later life at the *Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London*

Creation of marriage, fertility & labour market histories at *King's College London and the University of Toronto*

Health in retirement at *University College London and King's College London*

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Modelling financial circumstances in retirement

- A collaboration with PPI, an expert organisation undertaking rigorous research into retirement provision from an independent, long-term perspective.
- Feed into PPI's modelling of pension income which is based on hypothetical individuals.
 - Are such individuals representative of the population? (How long are typical career interruptions? What proportion of women return to work after having children?)
- WHERL will provide a set of individuals based on real data from nationally representative datasets. This will mean that a more realistic set of individuals can be used, improving the accuracy of this sort of individual model.

Research team:

King's College London: Karen Glaser, Debora Price, Laurie Corna, Loretta Platts, Rachel Stuchbury, Lawrence Sacco, Giorgio di Gessa.

Pensions Policy Institute: Chris Curry, Mel Duffield, John Adams, Shamil Popat.

Labour market trajectories in later life

Employment status & mental health in later life at the *Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London*

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Labour market trajectories in later life



- What are the health implications, for individuals, of extending working lives?
 - Is continuing to work at older ages realistic only for those in better health to begin with, or for those with certain privileges?
 - Will the better-off gain, in health terms, from extending working lives, while the less-well-off are harmed?
 - Or, is continuing to work likely to benefit all, and perhaps even reduce health inequalities among older adults?
- Examination of late career histories of people from Britain, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the USA from ages 50 to 70 years.
- Collaboration between King's College London (Laurie Corna), the University of Toronto (Diana Worts & Peggy McDonough) and University College London (Amanda Sacker & Anne McMunn).

“Work and Health in Later Life: Pathways and Social Patterning in Comparative Context” is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.



Dissemination activities 2015–2017



- Dissemination activities will take place from mid-2015 to early 2017.
- A series of briefing notes will be created over the next 2½ years, accompanying research articles from the various work packages as they are accepted for publication.
- A series of seminars is being planned, in collaboration with AgeUK and the Pensions Policy Institute.
- Everything will be available through the website: www.wherl.ac.uk.

Thank you



www.wherl.ac.uk

