Productive Engagement of Older Adults: International Research, Practice, and Policy Introduction

Nancy Morrow-Howell · Ada C. Mui

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This is the second issue of a special double edition of *Ageing International* on the productive engagement of older adults. The productive aging perspective recognizes the growing capacity of the older population and promotes the maximal involvement of older adults in paid and unpaid work — as employees, volunteers, and caregivers. Countries across the globe are rethinking outdated policies and programs that view older adults more as “burden” than as “resource”. Cross-country discussions on productive engagement contribute to the development of new strategies to offset the demands of the changing demographics. The articles in these two issues of *Ageing International* derive from an international conference in Beijing, China in August 2011 and represent an on-going effort for gerontologists from various countries to learn from each other on this important topic.

In the first volume (winter, 2012), we considered the topics of caregiving and working. In this second issue, we focus on volunteering, an activity that is increasingly being recognized as positive for older adults who volunteer as well as the organizations in which they serve. We also include three community-based practice models from Taiwan, Singapore and United States. In this collection of papers, we present the current evidence-base underlying existing programs and policies related to these productive activities. We identified challenges, opportunities, and knowledge needs in regards to the productive engagement of older adults. We hope these articles advance knowledge and skills in research as well as program and policy development in across all countries.

N. Morrow-Howell (✉)

Harvey A. Friedman Center for Aging and the George Warren Brown School of Social Work,
Washington University in St. Louis, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130, USA
e-mail: morrow-howell@wustl.edu

A. C. Mui

Columbia University School of Social Work, 1255 Amsterdam Ave, New York, NY 10027, USA
e-mail: acm5@columbia.edu

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Nancy Morrow-Howell, MSW, PhD is the Ralph and Muriel Pumphrey Professor of Social Work at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work and the Director of the Harvey A. Friedman Center for Aging at Washington University in St. Louis. She studies the productive engagement of older adults and teaches gerontology and research courses.

Ada C. Mui, PhD, ACSW, LMSW is currently a Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work in New York City. She is also a Faculty Associate at the Center for Social Development, Washington University in St. Louis. Internationally, she has been a Fellow at the Sau Po Center on Ageing at the University of Hong Kong; an Honorary Professor at Beijing Normal University, Beijing Youth Politics College, and the University of Hong Kong, China. In Taiwan, she is a Research Fellow at the Social Policy Research Center at the National Taiwan University.