

MEDIA RELEASE

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BARRIERS FOR OLDER WORKERS: HEALTH, CARING AND DISCRIMINATION

In an address at today's Australian Conference of Economists (ACE 2012), CEPAR Director, John Piggott discussed the main barriers preventing older people from working.

Professor Piggott told the audience of 100 delegates that the main challenges facing mature-aged workers are declining health, caring responsibilities, and age discrimination.

He discussed the importance of the 2010 National Employment Standards which include flexible arrangements for child care and said this flexibility should be extended to include care of adults with disability.

"We need to tackle age discrimination in the workplace and reduce the barriers for older workers. The ageing of Australia's population is going to have serious implications on our economy if older workers participation rates remain static. Lifting participation rates by 10 percent for workers aged 55-69 will significantly reduce the financial pressure associated with our ageing society," Professor Piggott said.

ACE 2012 - *The Future of Economics: Research, Policy and Relevance* - is being held this week at Victoria University in Melbourne. Delegates are drawn from government, industry and academia, representing current and future policy analysts and business decision makers. CEPAR is proud to be one of the sponsors of the conference.

Professor Piggott was part of a panel discussion and was joined by CEPAR Partner Investigator Olivia S. Mitchell from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and Phil Gallagher, Manger of the Retirement and Intergenerational Modelling Unit at The Treasury.

As one of the international keynote speakers, Professor Mitchell provided a perspective on population ageing in the United States. She discussed the impact of comparatively low savings rates in the US and a range of proposals to address the impact of population ageing, including providing people who have worked for 30 years with a minimum benefit payment.

Phil Gallagher discussed the fiscal risks from population ageing and The Treasury modelling behind the Intergenerational Reports. He also presented Treasury analysis of the drivers of population ageing and intergenerational change, including workforce participation rates and government health care spending.

[View Professor Piggott's presentation slides >](#)

[View Professor Mitchell's presentation slides >](#)

[View Phil Gallagher's presentation slides >](#)