

## SSPARC

### Annual Festival of Social Science 2015

#### **Presentation**

Grandparents and later-life working: How grandparent care affects decisions around working and retirement

#### **Speaker**

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#### **Abstract**

In the context of population ageing, many governments including that of the UK are encouraging people to extend their working lives. Policy changes including raising state pension ages and introducing legislation to outlaw age discrimination and abolish mandatory retirement have raised the effective age of retirement in the UK, especially for women. The changing pensions landscape is also prompting expectations of working longer for financial reasons. Nevertheless, at the same time, many of the 'older workforce' (aged 50 and over) are an important source of childcare provision for working parents, with one third of workers with children aged under 15 receiving regular help from parents (Glaser et al, 2010). There may therefore be some significant tensions between working longer and providing childcare support.

Previous research has provided some partial insights: some women over-50 are choosing to 'retire' early so that they can support their daughters working full-time (Loretto and Vickerstaff, 2013); more men may be involved in grandparenting than previously thought (TUC, 2014); and younger women may be increasingly expecting their own retirement to incorporate some form of grandparent childcare (Loretto, 2014). However, we are lacking in-depth understanding of the experiences, preferences and perspectives of grandparents providing care and how their decisions interact with their work, career and retirement choices.

The results presented are from a project interviewing 60 grandparent-carers. The paper will explore the ways in which grandparenting may affect attitudes and behaviours in later working life and will consider the intergenerational implications for labour market participation across the lifecourse.