

Geriatrics and Gerontology/Stroud Center

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Overview

The Center was founded and endowed in 1995. Its mission is to foster scholarly activities contributing to the prevention or delaying of losses in the qualities of living that may accompany chronic diseases and aging. The Center seeks to open and advance the field of studies of qualities of life in health and aging, through its own research, training, and clinical model development, and through collaborative work with colleagues.

Current Research

Early Prevention of Impairments of Quality of Life In Elders: Data archives at the Center have enabled the identification of risk markers for key health determinants of impaired quality of life in elders: declines in the performance of daily tasks, and the development of mood and cognitive disorders. In collaboration with the Division of Geriatric Medicine the clinical relevance of markers is being studied, including self-rated information. Anergia (low energy) is a particular focus of current study.

Stroud International Focus Groups on Quality of Life in Alzheimer's disease: In association with Alzheimer's Disease International, views on improving quality of life in dementia based on personal experiences in giving and receiving care have been gathered from caregivers and persons with dementia in a series of interactive workshops in North America, New Zealand, Southern Europe, the Caribbean, Far East and (in 2006) Central Europe. Content analysis by grounded theory method has been completed and reported, and lodged on a multilingual web site.

Inheritance of Limitations On Quality of Life In Later Life: Having completed and published findings showing that impaired function among elders is attributable largely to non-inherited illness, accident, life style and aging effects, a new data cohort is being analyzed to determine the heritability of healthy aging.

The Contributions of Xhosa Elders To the Quality of Life of A Disadvantaged Community: A completed study shows that health problems frequently accompany the valuable contributions Xhosa elders make to their family and community. The recommendations from this study in a large township (Khayelitsha) by Cape Town are that geriatric services should tailor their interventions to enable elders to maintain this essential role and without undue suffering.

Choices, Choosing and the Nature of Quality of Life: A model of quality of life constructed by the Center has been now widely recognized to have a key bearing on standards of good long term care. This model features the transactions surrounding choices and choosing as necessary and sufficient for understanding, evaluating and improving health related quality of life in aging. The major reform movement in nursing home standards has designated a symposium in 2007 to expand on how this model can provide a science base for quality care. A related cross-national proposal is under submission.

Culture Fair Assessment: Over the past thirty years, the Center has engaged in focused research on culture fair assessment. Numerous conferences, publications and international collaborations have resulted from this effort.

Patient Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS:) One of the most recent activities related to culture fair assessment is involvement with the NIH Roadmap Project to Improve Health-related Measurement among Ethnically Diverse Groups. This is an effort devoted to establishing an item bank that can be used for computerized adaptive testing of health conditions. Six sites across the country are working in areas such as pain, arthritis and cancer symptoms.

Resource Center for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR): The Columbia Active Life of Minority Elders (CALME) Center is one of six Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (RCMARs). RCMAR scholars are junior faculty who are mentored by their research sponsors and by the Faculty of the Methods and Data Seminars. There are currently 10 active or former RCMAR pilot investigators. The intent of this program is to promote and support minority investigators and research related to ethnically diverse groups.

Partnering with the New York State Department of Health and the Agency for Healthcare, Research and Quality (AHRQ) To Improve Quality of Care: Staff of the Center have worked with the NYSDOH with respect to several projects aimed at improving quality of care. An ongoing effort is an evaluation (funded by AHRQ) of best practices for nursing home and adult care facility (ACF) residents.

Overcoming Impediments to Communication in Dementia: The Feeling-Tone Questionnaire (FTQ) has been developed by senior scientists at the Center to record visible emotional reactions and verbal responses to questions regarding depression in dementia. During the past several years faculty of the Geriatric Psychiatry Fellowship Program have worked with an interdepartmental team (Teachers College and Columbia University School of Social Work) to refine the psychometric properties of the FTQ. A monograph on the development of the FTQ and its psychometric properties has been published.

Neuroleptic Sensitivity and Dementia in Elderly Psychiatric Inpatients: The purpose of this study is to develop and study the psychometric properties of a chart-based questionnaire for use by non-physician staff to identify patients at risk for developing health consequences of prolonged treatment with neuroleptics. A paper has been published and two poster presentations delivered at national scientific meetings.

Education and Training

The Statewide Geriatric Psychiatry Residency and Fellowship Programs: This one or two year full-time training program is based at Greater Binghamton Health Center in upstate New York with monthly rotations at Psychiatric Institute and Rockland Psychiatric Center, and includes rotation sites in upstate affiliated hospitals and health care facilities and in New York City.

The Statewide Geriatric Grand Round Series: A 14 session series of Grand Rounds and Clinical Case Conferences by the Columbia Geriatric Psychiatry Program faculty is presented annually. (In collaboration with Greater Binghamton Health Center and Rockland Psychiatric Center).

The Geriatric Teaching Day and Geriatric Mental Health Teaching Days: The Geriatric Teaching Day (GTD) is offered annually in collaboration with SUNY Upstate Medical Center- Binghamton Campus, Greater Binghamton Health Center, and the Columbia University Geriatric Psychiatry Residency/Fellowship Program. The Geriatric Mental Health Teaching Days (GMHTD) are 5 teaching days offered over the course of the year in Syracuse, in collaboration with Crouse Memorial Hospital, SUNY Upstate Medical Center and the Columbia University Geriatric Psychiatry Residency/Fellowship Program.

The Geriatric Scholar Certificate Program: The Columbia-New York Geriatric Education Center (CNYGEC), a collaboration with New York University and the Center for Aging Research, Education and Service (CARES) in Upstate New York, provides certificates in post-professional training in interdisciplinary Geriatrics and Gerontology.

The Quentin N. Burdick Program for Rural Interdisciplinary Training: This three-year program, which is supported by funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, is developing a national model for interdisciplinary geriatric mental health training in rural MUAs for health care learners with the goal of improving access to mental health services for the geriatric population in medically underserved Central New York. Distance education is a central feature of this program. The TeleHealth Videoconference Case

Consultation Program is the flagship program of this federally sponsored effort. TeleHealth Videoconference Case Consultation Program includes a series of 14 telehealth videocase conferences annually and involves interdisciplinary health care teams from nursing homes and other long-term care facilities in medically underserved areas upstate and Columbia University faculty from the Geriatric Psychiatry Residency/Fellowship Program who provide case consultations from Columbia. The program is being conducted in collaboration with NYSPI, New York University School of Nursing and Utica College of Syracuse University.

The Geriatric Mental Health Program on Disaster Preparedness and Bioterrorism: This program, which began after 9/11 and received funding in 2004 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, is developing and disseminating a national curriculum that focuses on the mental health consequences of disasters, emergencies and associated public health crises on older persons. The target audience of the curriculum is health care professionals and allied health care providers. A series of videotaped case presentations and Emergency Room Vignettes have been developed as teaching aides for this national curriculum (in collaboration with NYU and Mt. Sinai Medical Center). Additionally, a Geriatric Emergency Preparedness (GEP) Certificate Program has been developed and implemented annually since 2005. This certificate program will be integrated eventually into a national curriculum on geriatric emergency preparedness.

The Geriatric Education and Mental Health (GEMH) Teleconference Project of the Quentin N. Burdick Program for Rural Interdisciplinary Training, a Stroud Center program funded by DHHS, completed a series of 14 teleconference clinical case consultations with teams from health care facilities in upstate medically underserved areas. Consultations, which originated from the audio-visual studio at Psychiatric Institute, were provided by faculty of the Geriatric Psychiatry program.

Awards/Honors

Dr. Neil Hall, geriatrician and Stroud Center Associate Research Scientist, received the Geriatric Scholar Award, co-sponsored by the Stroud Center and the Consortium of New York Geriatric Education Centers

The Columbia University Geriatric Psychiatry Residency/Fellowship Program was awarded the maximum term of 5 years continued accreditation after a successful accreditation review and site visit this past summer.

Dr. Mahfuz Rahman, a 2005 graduate of the program, was appointed Clinical Director at Greater Binghamton Health Center

Grants

Consortium of New York Geriatric Education Centers (John Toner, PI), 7/1/06-6/30/07. Funded by the New York Community Trust and the Brookdale Foundation Group. The grant will develop, expand, disseminate and infuse into existing programs geriatric training of interdisciplinary health professionals and faculty in New York State. A component of this training is to prepare learners from a variety of disciplines to become knowledgeable in geriatric mental health.