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The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has introduced numerous challenges to the global scientific community and has been particularly disruptive to the conduct of ongoing clinical trials. Gerontological studies that focus on older adults with cognitive impairments have endured additional challenges ranging from increased vulnerability of this group to COVID-19, thereby prohibiting study participation, to difficulties in participant engagement as a product of a worsening Digital Divide. The purpose of this talk is to describe the pandemic-related factors that have influenced recruitment and enrollment of older adults with mild cognitive impairment and mild dementia in an ongoing feasibility study of a physical activity smartphone app. We discuss the changes we made to recruitment procedures and the impact those changes have had on the success of enrolling individuals in the study. We conclude with a discussion of feasible strategies and procedural alterations moving forward that may facilitate achievement of enrollment goals.

PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY IN DEMENTIA EDUCATION AND SCREENING IN AN ETHNICALLY DIVERSE, RURAL COMMUNITY DURING A PANDEMIC

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Rural, ethnically diverse older adults experience disparities in dementia detection/management. The Covid-19 quarantine exacerbated these disparities, and threatened faith-based dementia education and screening activities. We investigated the effectiveness of a telephone-based outreach for increasing dementia knowledge and detecting cognitive risk among a rural, diverse, underserved community of 89% African American, Hispanic, and Haitian Creole residents, Faith-based health educators, trained using virtual Alzheimer's Association resources, contacted church congregants who responded to radio worship service announcements. Participants completed telephone measures of basic dementia knowledge and cognitive risk. Of the estimated 120 persons across five churches who received an invitation, 75% (n = 90) participated in dementia education and memory screening via telephone. Twelve (80%) of the 15 participants assessed as being at risk followed up with their provider. Rural residents are known for preferring face-to-face contact. Their willingness to complete health-promoting research activities by telephone highlighted the community's interest in dementia awareness.

Session 1130 (Symposium)

SLEEP AND HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS: NEW RESEARCH FROM EARLY-CAREER INVESTIGATORS

Chair: Christopher Kaufmann
Discussant: Amy Berkley

Sleep and circadian patterns change as people age and are linked to a number of health and psychosocial outcomes. As such, there is a need to continue generating new knowledge about sleep in older adults by encouraging early-career scientists to research this topic. In this symposium, sponsored by the Sleep, Circadian Rhythms and Aging Interest Group, we will showcase studies by early-career researchers at the masters through junior faculty level who conduct work in sleep and its impact on health outcomes in older adults. Our symposium will have five presentations. The first will examine how sleep and loneliness may mediate relationships between marital quality and depressive symptoms. The second study will assess links between personality characteristics and objectively measured chronotype. Our third presentation will determine the longitudinal association of sleep duration with body mass index. The fourth will evaluate how an intervention to reduce functional disability in low-income older adults impacts sleep quality. Finally, our fifth presentation will focus on understanding how sleep duration and changes in sleep patterns may impact speech-in-noise performance. Overall, our symposium will highlight multidisciplinary studies of sleep and health outcomes that are of importance to older populations and promote the work of the next generation of sleep, circadian rhythms, and aging scientists.

SLEEP AND LONELINESS AS MECHANISMS THROUGH WHICH MARITAL QUALITY PREDICTS DEPRESSION AMONG OLDER ADULTS

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Pathways through which spousal support and strain influence older adults' well-being are poorly understood. We examined sleep quality and loneliness as mechanisms through which support and strain predict depressive symptoms across ten years utilizing National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project data. Our sample included partnered participants at waves 1 and 2 (N = 1,293; 39% female, M age = 66, SD = 6.93). Support (e.g., rely on spouse) and strain (e.g., spouse criticizes you) were measured at W1, loneliness (UCLA) and sleep quality (restless sleep) were measured at W2, and depression (CES-D) was measured at W3. We estimated latent-variable structural equation models, controlling for age, gender, and W1 depression. Indirect effects of support and strain on depressive symptoms through loneliness were significant. There was an additional trend-level indirect effect of spousal strain on depressive symptoms through restless sleep. Findings highlight multiple pathways through which marital quality predicts later-life well-being.

LINKS BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND SLEEP MIDPOINT IN OLDER ADULTS IN THE NATIONAL SOCIAL LIFE, HEALTH, AND AGING PROJECT

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