

the majority of patients of a geriatric audiology clinic with co-morbid hearing loss and cognitive impairment. In a study of hearing aid use in 67 patients with these comorbidities, over 90% used hearing aids successfully with measurable benefit for both patients and caregivers. Furthermore, we will discuss approaches to improving communication for LTC residents with dementia and hearing loss through the support of audiologists during remote visits with physicians and families during the pandemic.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH HEARING, VISION, AND COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

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Many older adults being evaluated for dementia have unrecognized hearing and/or vision problems which can confound results of neuropsychological assessment(s) and can impact care recommendations. International care standards for detection, assessment, and management of people living with dementia (PwD) are rarely addressed yet are critical. We propose a set of recommendations crafted to foster the highest quality health care to enable PwD to live well with these combined impairments. The focus is detection, diagnosis, treatment, and support of PwD who have age-related hearing and/or vision impairments. The guiding principles underlying the recommendations was a focus on promotion of a person-centered approach, but to be pragmatic in considering all contextual levels including professional care pathways and socio-economic/policy factors internationally. The recommendations are inclusive of all stakeholders who work together to promote equity and mutual respect across the domains. The guidelines are designed to be pragmatic, implementable, resource sparing, and sustainable.

Session 1330 (Symposium)

ABUSE OF AND INTERVENTION FOR OLDER ADULTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Chair: Pamela Teaster

Discussant: Cory Bolkan

Beginning in the United States in 2020, SARS-CoV-2 lead to unprecedented changes in the lives of both younger and older people. Efforts to mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, which included physical distancing and self-quarantine not only upended the lives of many people but also created natural laboratory conditions for the mistreatment of older adults. Exploring the mistreatment of older adults during the pandemic presented an unprecedented opportunity to examine perspectives of service providers and affected older adults. This symposium offers four perspectives on this subject. Dr. Karen Roberto and colleagues will present changes and challenges that COVID-19 brought for Adult Protective Service staff and the vulnerable adults whom they serve. Ms. Lori Smetanka and colleagues will present changes and challenges that COVID-19 created for state and local Long-Term Care

Ombudsman. Dr. Holly Ramsey-Klawnsnik and Ms. Tammy Seaver will report on how the pandemic affected Nevada Adult Protective Services clients, casework, and staff. Finally, Dr. Pamela Teaster and colleagues will discuss how older adults experienced exploitation attempts during the early months of the pandemic. Dr. Cory Bolkan will begin the discussion, highlighting how conditions brought about by COVID-19 both enabled and thwarted efforts to address elder abuse.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Karen Roberto,¹ Pamela Teaster,² Jyoti Savla,¹ Imogen Fua,³ Karl Urban,⁴ and Emily Hoyt,¹ 1. *Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, United States*, 2. *Virginia Tech, BLACKSBURG, West Virginia, United States*, 3. *WRMA, Inc., Rockville, Maryland, United States*, 4. *WRMA, Inc., Arlington, Virginia, United States*

The purpose of study was to explore changes in implemented of APS programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This three-phase study began with telephone interviews with eight state-level APS administrators of early phase “hot-spots” that were used to inform questions for the Phase II national survey of state APS programs. Forty-seven states completed an on-line survey on the effects of the pandemic on work and workload, policy and practice, staff, partnerships, and preparedness. Phase III interviews with 7 local APS programs provided an “on-the-ground” view of challenges of meeting clients’ needs. Although most APS programs reported fewer reports of adult maltreatment than before the pandemic, the stress and disruption of COVID-19 required new work arrangements, to which programs adapted technological and managerial support to care for the needs of both APS staff and the clients they served. Finding provide insight for policy and planning requirements for future catastrophic events.

COVID-19 AND THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM: FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL STUDY

Lori Smetanka,¹ Chenguang Du,² Pamela Teaster,³ and Kathryn Ratliff,² 1. *The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, Washington, District of Columbia, United States*, 2. *Center for Gerontology, Virginia Tech, BLACKSBURG, Virginia, United States*, 3. *Virginia Tech, BLACKSBURG, West Virginia, United States*

The purpose of our study was to explore changes for long-term care ombudsman programs across the country in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study team explored the effect of COVID-19 on programs: cases, resident engagement, complaint investigation and resolution, services, complaints, changes in visitation, and preparedness plans. The research team developed survey items and beta-tested them with state and local LTCOs prior to distributing the survey nationally to State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman in order to characterize experiences of the participants. From 62 state LLTC respondents we learned there were 81.0% fewer cases received, 97.36% were less able to engage with residents, 78.95% were less involved

in the engagement of residents in complaint investigation and resolution and there were 71.05% fewer activities involved in investigations. Not surprisingly, there was an 80.0% increase in information that the LTCO provided to the media.

COVID PANDEMIC IMPACT ON NEVADA ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Holly Ramsey-Klawnsnik, *Klawnsnik & Klawnsnik Assoc & Consultant, Nevada Adult Protective Services Program, Canton, Massachusetts, United States*

Empirical data regarding Covid pandemic impact on the Nevada Adult Protective Services (APS) Program clients, casework, and staff was gathered and analyzed as part of a multi-faceted program evaluation. Key findings include: 66% of the staff agreed or strongly agreed that the pandemic made their jobs more challenging. Respondents reported Covid-related challenges faced by clients, the program, and themselves as social workers serving older and vulnerable adults. Adverse client impacts observed included increased social and emotional isolation, loss of housing, exacerbation of symptoms of mental illness, necessary services being cut from clients subsequent to testing Covid positive, and fear and reluctance to allow needed visiting service providers, such as home health aides, into their homes. We will discuss the implications of the findings on APS services and clients, and on related health and human services designed to promote the wellness and independence of older and vulnerable adults.

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF OLDER ADULTS DURING THE EARLY MONTHS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Pamela Teaster,¹ Karen Roberto,² Jyoti Savla,² Chenguang Du,³ Emily Hoyt,² Scott Beach,⁴ Neil Charness,⁵ and Peter Lichtenberg,⁶ *1. Virginia Tech, BLACKSBURG, West Virginia, United States, 2. Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, United States, 3. Center for Gerontology, Virginia Tech, BLACKSBURG, Virginia, United States, 4. University of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States, 5. Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, United States, 6. Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, United States*

COVID-19 created a “perfect storm” for financial exploitation directed at older adults. We invited adults aged 60 and older enrolled in gerontology research registries at Virginia Tech, Florida State University, Wayne State University, and University of Pittsburgh to complete an on-line survey about experiences with financial exploitation by strangers. The 997 respondents ranged in age from 60 to 98 ($M = 71.3$; $SD = 6.8$); most identified as White (93.4%), female (64.2%) and living with a spouse/partner (58%). Approximately one-half of respondents (56.87%) reported experiencing a scam attempt about COVID-19 issues. Most contact by scammers was electronic (49%) and frequently occurred two or more times (40%). Most respondents ignored the request (i.e., hung up phone, deleted text/email, threw away mail). However, 9% sent the requested payment, and 4% gave the scammer their personal information. Confidence in financial matters and having attended financial educational programs protected older adults from being scammed.

Session 1335 (Paper)

Adult Protection and Elder Abuse

CHANGING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE CASE OF ELDER ABUSE

Elsie Yan,¹ Daniel Lai,² and Vincent Lee,³ *1. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, Hong Kong, 2. Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong, 3. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong*

Since the first confirmed case being identified in January 2020, authorities in Hong Kong have implemented various measures in an attempt to control the spread of the disease. These measures include compulsory quarantining of infected persons and those suspected of exposure, temporary closure of high-risk premises, and suspension of public activities and services, encouraging work-from-home arrangement etc. These measures, however, may exacerbate the impact of known risk factors and create new avenues for elder mistreatment. Life stress, financial strains and work-from-home arrangements increase chances of family conflicts, cessation of public services increases burden in the already stressed caregivers. This study examines the changing intergenerational family relations in the midst of the pandemic. A total of 1200 community dwelling senior citizens participated through responding to a telephone survey. Information was collected on participants' demographic characteristics, perceived disruptions brought about by COVID-19, family relations, physical and mental health, etc. Family conflicts and abuse were commonly reported: 27.8% reported family conflicts, 14.5% psychological abuse, 3.1% physical abuse, 3.9% financial abuse. A large proportion of participants (41.8%), however, also reported improved family relations during the pandemic. Results of logistic regression indicate that advanced age, female gender, poor financial situation were significant predictors for family conflicts and abuse. Contrary to our expectations, pandemic related disruptions in daily lives and perceived safety in the community were not associated in family conflicts and abuse in the present sample.

INCIDENCE AND RISK FACTORS OF ELDER MISTREATMENT IN THE COMMUNITY: A LONGITUDINAL POPULATION-BASED STUDY

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Prior population-based elder mistreatment (EM) risk factor research has focused on problem prevalence using cross-sectional designs, which cannot make causal inferences between proposed risk factors and EM or discern existing cases from new cases entering the population. This study sought to estimate the incidence of EM and identify risk factors for new cases. It is a ten-year prospective, population-based cohort study with data collected between 2009 (Wave 1) and 2019 (Wave 2). Based on Wave 1 random, stratified