

experience. Such information is critical if we are to transform our nation's homeless system, which is based largely on a male model of homelessness, to better support women at risk or experiencing homelessness. In this presentation, we therefore share findings from our qualitative study of homeless older urban women. Using a phenomenological approach, we conducted and recorded semi-structured, in depth interviews with fifteen chronically homeless women in their fifties. Our analysis process was inductive and iterative with the culminating phases being the generation and interpretation of themes. Our analysis revealed the links between place, social connection, sense of belonging, and identity. The women's narratives uncovered how the time-space discontinuity, created through homelessness, shaped the struggles they faced in trying to survive in degraded or threatening environments, altering their identities and impacting self-esteem. Also revealed was that mobility is a key factor to maintaining the place-identity connection. The women's narratives highlighted how forced mobility with constrained choice not only led to their pathways into homelessness but also dominated their daily navigation of street and shelter life. We conclude by exploring the question of how we might redesign policies and programs to disrupt homelessness for women in later life.

USING PHOTOVOICE TO EXPLORE THE SALIENCY OF NEIGHBORHOOD LANDMARKS FOR PERSONS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

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This study demonstrates the potential of Photovoice, a participatory action research method involving participant-generated photo-elicitation, to explore how persons living with dementia (PLWDs) perceive neighborhood landmarks. Previous research has highlighted the role of well-designed, stable geographical landmarks in improving the navigability of neighborhoods for PLWDs. However, the specific attributes that render landmarks salient have not yet been sufficiently explored, resulting in inadequate evidence-based environmental design guidelines for dementia-friendly communities (DFCs). To address this gap, a Photovoice study was conducted with five community-dwelling PLWDs and their care partners, as part of a dementia-friendly neighborhood walking program in the city of Seattle, USA. Photovoice facilitated the exploration of saliency of neighborhood landmarks from an emic perspective by empowering PLWDs to identify and take photos of salient landmarks during the group walk and interpret and reflect on attributes that contributed to saliency using the photos as visual aids in a focus group discussion and survey questionnaire. PLWDs associated the saliency of landmarks not only with objective physical attributes, e.g., size, shape, color, texture, but also with subjective factors linked to their past, passions, hobbies, and emotions related to having dementia. Findings suggest that the design of outdoor landmarks should satisfy universal design principles, as well as aspects of familiarity, recognizability, and memorability, to ensure that the neighborhood physical environment provides navigational support to PLWDs. The study proposes using Photovoice

to facilitate community engagement in the planning and design of DFCs and mobilize people's lived experience to generate more robust dementia-friendly environmental design guidelines.

SESSION 1015 (SYMPOSIUM)

AGING STRONG 2020: INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE LONELINESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS

Chair: Charlotte Yeh, *AARP Services, Inc., Washington, District of Columbia, United States*

Co-Chair: Daniel Russell, *Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, United States*

Discussant: James Schaeffer, *Optum, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States*

Research confirms serious and concerning health implications for lonely and socially isolated older adults. Studies consistently demonstrate that older adults who are lonely or socially isolated have higher rates of depression, more health conditions, and greater mortality. AARP Services, Inc. (ASI) and UnitedHealthcare (UHC) are committed to the health and well-being of insureds in AARP® Medicare Supplement Plans insured by UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company (for New York certificate holders, UnitedHealthcare of New York), recognizing that health and wellness should be promoted on a holistic level to ensure successful aging. As part of this commitment, a research initiative entitled Aging Strong 2020 has been developed. Its purpose is to impact insureds' personal and social investments in their well-being. Thus a related series of interventions are aiming to increase resilience by focusing on enhanced purpose in life, social connectedness, and optimism. This symposium will specifically discuss these efforts related to social connectedness and how they have improved well-being among lonely older adults. First discussed is the prevalence and outcomes of loneliness in a large national survey. Interventions include use of animatronic pets, a telephonic reminiscent memory program, and an online self-compassion mindfulness program. Findings from these initiatives demonstrate that interventions designed to improve loneliness and well-being among lonely older adults can contribute to the holistic model of health.

LIFEBIO: PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES IN A TELEPHONIC-BASED REMINISCENCE PROGRAM

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Older adults facing age-related transitions are at increased risk for depression and loneliness. Reminiscence therapy has demonstrated positive outcomes for older adults, including improved socialization and reduced depression. A program known as LifeBio was designed as a group intervention to engage participants by capturing their life stories to positively impact wellness through reminiscence. This program was adapted to a telephonic format for the Aging Strong 2020 initiative. Semi-structured interviews eliciting feedback about participants' experiences