

findings from a qualitative study examining the multi-level challenges experienced by nursing assistants during the pandemic. Cimarolli examines if quality of employer communication and workers' perceived COVID-19-related preparedness mitigate the impact of work-related stress on NH workers' decision to resign. Franzosa shares recommendations based on priorities identified by nursing assistants and administrators to build future resilience based on lessons learned. Finally, Simpson identifies factors associated with states' decisions to adopt COVID-19 testing mandates for workers in NHs. Dr. Zimmerman discusses study findings and their contributions for creating supportive NH work environments to ensure most optimal NH worker and resident quality of life.

CHALLENGES FACED BY NURSING HOME DIRECT CARE WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A COMPARISON ACROSS CARE SETTINGS

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The COVID-19 pandemic has generated awareness of the value of the direct care workforce to provide care in settings serving those most at risk from the disease. However, few studies have gauged the impact of COVID-19 on this workforce and their pandemic-related challenges. The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges and stress experienced by direct care workers (N=1,414) and their perceptions of preparation and quality of employer communication during this health crisis. Nursing home (NH) workers reported separation from family members and understaffing as the top external and work-related challenges. They felt adequately prepared and gave their employers high marks for communicating with them during the pandemic. NH direct care workers were more likely to report increased workload and understaffing as a challenge compared to workers in home and community-based settings. They also experienced a significantly higher number of work-related challenges compared to workers in assisted living.

JOB RESIGNATION IN NURSING HOMES DURING COVID-19: THE ROLE OF EMPLOYER COMMUNICATION AND WORKER PREPAREDNESS

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Although research on factors mitigating the negative impact of strain/stress experienced by nursing home (NH) workers during the pandemic is emerging, there is no research on how COVID-19-related work stress and employer supports influence NH workers decision to resign. The purpose of this study was to investigate if high quality communication related to COVID-19 by the employer – a form of job support - can mitigate the impact of work stress on NH employees (N=1,730) decision to resign by optimizing employees' preparedness to care for residents with COVID-19. Guided by the Job-Demands-Control-Support Model and

employing path analyses, results indicate that higher stress was associated with greater likelihood of resigning, which operated through the paths of communication quality and preparedness. While higher stress was associated with less optimal quality of communication, good quality of communication was associated with more optimal preparedness which was associated with reduced likelihood of leaving one's job.

CHALLENGES REPORTED BY CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANTS DURING COVID-19: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Certified nursing assistants (CNAs) who care for vulnerable nursing home residents faced unprecedented circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While staff and PPE shortages were ubiquitous and widely known, the focus of this qualitative work was to gain a broader understanding of the numerous challenges they faced. We conducted 10 remote focus groups with CNAs at 5 nursing homes (N=56) in downstate New York. Content analysis was conducted, and emerging themes identified. Results showed a myriad of emotional challenges including helplessness, fear and anxiety. Operational challenges focused on lack of COVID testing capacity, information, and consistent guidance and support, in addition to staff and equipment. Individual challenges included personal experience of COVID illness and that of colleagues, and balancing high concurrent demands of work and family. These results are discussed in the context of developing recommendations to promote future safety, skill refinement and enhanced resilience in the workforce moving forward.

IT WAS TRIAL BY FIRE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING A STRONGER NURSING HOME WORKFORCE AFTER COVID-19

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The COVID-19 crisis showed the urgent need for a unified, well-supported nursing home workforce. The objective of this qualitative study was to examine the lived experience of certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and administrators during COVID-19 to identify best practices moving forward. Six administrator interviews and 10 remote focus groups with CNAs at 5 nursing homes (N=56) were examined through directed content analysis. Based on priorities identified by CNAs and administrators, the following practices may be most impactful: 1) ongoing and responsive staff training; 2) transparent, direct, and two-way communication channels; 3) prioritizing hiring permanent staff to avoid shortages and reliance on agency staff; 4) building collaborative staff-management relationships; 5) providing flexible job benefits; 6) providing staff-centered emotional support resources; and 7) appraising COVID-19 innovations. Our

results suggest that rather than returning to “business as usual,” nursing homes can draw on these lessons to build a more sustainable workforce and industry.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH STATE MANDATE OF NURSING HOME STAFF TESTING DURING COVID-19

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COVID-19 has presented challenges for nursing homes (NHs) and other congregate living settings which serve older adults at high risk for morbidity and death from the virus. This study identified factors associated with states’ adopting a mandate for regular staff testing for COVID-19 in NHs. Potential correlates included state government ideology and capacity, NH supply and demand, prevailing economic conditions, existing state policies, and NH characteristics. Findings indicate that percent for profit NHs is most strongly associated with adoption of a state staff testing mandate. Governing capacity (average legislative salary), percent population at risk for COVID-19, and existing public policy (percent Medicaid spending devoted to long-term services and supports (LTSS)) were also associated with the probability of adoption. Based on these results, states with more proprietary facilities and greater capacities for government action, investment in Medicaid LTSS, and at-risk populations were more likely to mandate regular staff testing in NHs.

Session 2450 (Symposium)

OBSERVING PERSONALITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE: HOW PERSONALITY INFLUENCES DAILY ACTIVITIES AND MOOD

Chair: Shiyang Zhang

Personality reflects the influence of older adults’ past experiences on their tendencies to engage in certain behaviors and generate emotions. An increasing number of studies have focused on the expression of personality in older adults’ everyday life. Specifically, personality features have been associated with daily activities, affect reactivity, and mood. This symposium draws on Ecological Momentary Assessments and longitudinal analysis to understand how personality is manifested in daily life, and how daily emotional experiences accumulate over time to influence physical health. Lee and colleagues examine how personality is associated with daily activities and find that extraversion is positively associated with activity diversity in two adult samples. Pasquini and colleagues consider the within-person fluctuations in personality traits and demonstrate the possibility of using daily behaviors and affect as markers of extraversion and neuroticism. Zhang and Fingerman assess how positive and negative moods concurrently change in reaction

to daily social contacts and confirm that narcissism moderates such associations. Finally, this symposium also focuses on the cumulative effect of daily emotions on physical health. Leger and colleagues address the long-term association between personality (e.g., neuroticism, conscientiousness) and physical health and identify the mediating role of negative reactivity to daily stressors. Collectively, the presentations provide an in-depth analysis of personality’s impact on concrete daily behaviors and emotions, as well as their profound long-term effect on physical health. Our discussion outlines future research directions and highlights how inter-individual differences, simultaneous life events, and social interactions intertwine to influence individuals’ behaviors that occur in natural settings.

SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS AND MOOD: THE MODERATING ROLE OF NARCISSISM

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Social contacts may lead to more positive and less negative emotions in late life, yet we know little about how narcissism influences such associations, and whether contacts with close and not-close social partners impact mood differently. This study examined associations between social contacts, narcissism, and mood on the within- and between- person level. Older adults aged 65 + (N = 303) completed ecological momentary assessments in which they reported social contacts and mood every 3 hours for 5 to 6 days. Older adults had higher positive mood after contacting either close or not-close social partners, but only not-close social partners reduced negative mood. Multilevel models found positive associations between average social contacts number and positive mood among people scored lower on narcissism, and positive associations between social contacts and negative mood for those who scored higher on narcissism. Findings suggest the necessity of considering interpersonal differences in interventions targeting well-being.

WHO HAS ACTIVE LIFESTYLES? PERSONALITY AND ACTIVITY DIVERSITY IN ADULTHOOD

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Broad and even participation across daily activities (“activity diversity”) has been found to be associated with better health. Less is known about who has greater activity diversity. We examined whether personality traits are associated with activity diversity in two independent samples of adults. Data came from the Midlife in the United States Study II and Refresher (n=2623, Mage=54yrs) and Daily Experiences and Well-being in Late Life Study (n=308, Mage=74yrs) who responded to daily activity questions. We constructed activity diversity scores in each sample using Shannon’s entropy. We focused on three personality traits -- conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism -- often associated with health. Higher extraversion was associated with greater activity diversity, replicated across the two samples. The associations were independent of conscientiousness and neuroticism