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During the pandemic older people saw transformations in their social connections due to lockdowns and other restrictions. Technology provided one mechanism for them to stay connected with others, but technology may not be accessible or desirable for everyone. Gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age and other factors enhance or limit engagement with technology. This project explored experiences of older people in Mexico and Scotland during the pandemic and examined the potential of everyday technology to help maintain social connectedness. A mixed methods approach included secondary analysis of large-scale datasets alongside primary data. Online semi-structured interviews and focus groups were carried out with 36 older people in Mexico and 23 older people in Scotland. Sampling was purposeful creating a diverse sample across age, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The findings demonstrate that advantages and disadvantages accumulated in the life course determine how older people select, optimize and compensate for new ways of staying socially connected during the pandemic in both countries. The use of technologies among older people is further mediated by structural inequalities with differences found between Mexico and Scotland in specific patterns identified. Further, stereotypes about older age and technology use are obstacles to the use of technology, as they affect the perception of self-efficacy by older people. Despite the obstacles, this study has shown that older people have a broad range of resources that have enabled them to cope with the pandemic and utilise technology to maintain social connections. The project offers recommendations to support older people's human rights.

#### THE EXPERIENCES OF OLDER ADULTS WITH CANNABIS AND MENTAL HEALTH: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Following the 2018 federal legalization of cannabis in Canada, there was a drastic increase in older adults reporting marijuana use. Most cannabis research today focuses on children and young adults, however, it is important to acknowledge the potential harms in seniors as well. Aging and substance use presents unique considerations, such as the interactions between cannabis and chronic conditions, multiple comorbidities, polypharmacy, and mental health. The goal of this scoping review was to analyze the literature that addresses mental health outcomes of seniors who use cannabis, in order to answer the main research question: What is the relationship between older adults' use of cannabis and mental health? Following Arksey and O'Malley's five-stage framework, 10 electronic databases were searched along with a hand search of references. The search revealed 7000+ peer-reviewed and grey literature sources. 233 full-text sources were assessed for eligibility, with a total of 25 articles included. Thematic content analysis produced four major themes which addressed: (1) Usage characteristics; (2) User characteristics; (3) Outcomes; and (4) Physical and mental health considerations. Findings from this scoping

review are positioned in terms of their implications for research, practice, and policy. While more in-depth, qualitative methods are required to develop further research, several harm-reduction strategies may be immediately utilized by both users and healthcare practitioners. It is critical that older adults and their physicians are able to make cannabis-related decisions with evidence-informed guidance to prevent problematic cannabis use and ensure positive mental health outcomes.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE FUNCTION ON ADHERENCE TO BREAST CANCER SCREENING AMONG OLDER AMERICAN WOMEN

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Cognitive decline and impairment among older adults have become an important public health issue. Previous research shows older women have a greater prevalence of Alzheimer's disease than Men. Among women, breast cancer is one of the most common types of cancer. Over half of breast cancer deaths occur in women aged 65 and older. Therefore, early detection of breast cancer through mammogram screening is important among older women. This study aimed to examine the influence of cognitive function on adherence to mammogram breast cancer screening among older American women aged 65 and older. Data from the Health and Retirement Study (2012-2016) was obtained and analyzed. The independent variable of the study was cognitive function (normal, not normal). Adherence to mammogram (low, moderate, high) was the dependent variable. Multinomial regression was performed to examine the association between cognitive function and adherence to mammogram after controlling for demographic covariates. In the study, 33.3% of respondents had impaired cognitive function and 21.7% showed low adherence to mammogram screening. Regression results found that older women with impaired cognitive function were more likely to be in low adherence group (OR=1.30, p=0.01) or moderate adherence group (OR=1.47, p<0.001) relatively to be in high adherence group compared to older women with normal cognitive function. The development and implementation of interventions are needed for reducing barriers to accessing cancer screening services in high-risk vulnerable populations. This submission is considered late-breaking research because study findings were obtained from a recently completed student's master's project.

#### THE LINK BETWEEN ENVIRONMENT, AGE, AND HEALTH IN A LARGE COHORT OF COMPANION DOGS FROM THE DOG AGING PROJECT

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