

DEVELOPING SOCIAL CONVOY PALLIATIVE CARE MOBILE HEALTH FOR OLDER ADULTS

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Social Convoy Theory is well established in the gerontology literature and provides a framework for understanding the relationships of individuals in a group of people with whom they give and receive social support over the life-cycle. Previous research substantiates a link between the importance of social convoys and health outcomes among older adults with advanced illness. However, the concept of social convoy has not been applied to mobile health (mHealth) for palliative care. Often mHealth systems are designed for individual users, lacking innovative solutions for multiple, age-diverse, simultaneous users to maximize benefit. Therefore, the Social Convoy Palliative Care (Convoy-Pal) mobile application (K76AG059934) was developed using a rigorous iterative process with older patients, their social convoy, and health providers, to foster effective integration of the social convoy in palliative care-specific mHealth. Based on these findings, this presentation discusses strategies to design mHealth for a convoy of users in geriatric palliative care.

SESSION 1085 (SYMPOSIUM)

MAXWELL A. POLLACK AWARD LECTURE

Chair: Robert Harootyan, *Senior Service America Inc., Silver Spring, Maryland, United States*

The Maxwell A. Pollack Award for Productive Aging recognizes instances of practice informed by research and analysis, research that directly improved policy or practice, and distinction in bridging the worlds of research and practice. The award lecture will be presented by the 2018 recipient, Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD, University of Washington. This award is generously funded by The New York Community Trust.

LINKING LIVES: PROMOTING HEALTH EQUITY TO DISRUPT THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION

Karen Fredriksen Goldsen¹, *1. University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, United States*

Resulting from social, economic, and environmental disadvantage in vulnerable communities, health inequities have systematically created greater obstacles to aging. Despite the adversity of their lives, or perhaps because of it, older adults from vulnerable populations embody an Iridescent Life Course, displaying remarkable resilience and resistance, yet are at greater risk of health disparities and social isolation in later life. In the U.S. social isolation has reached epidemic proportions, creating a largely invisible public health crisis with few resources for an aging population. In her presentation, Professor Karen Fredriksen Goldsen will share her landmark longitudinal research on LGBTQ older adults, who have historically confronted social exclusion, with divergent pathways leading to social isolation. She will discuss the development and testing of community evidence-based interventions and how these findings can provide effective alternatives for anyone living in isolation as well as promote health equity, creating a future for full aging potential.

SESSION 1090 (SYMPOSIUM)

INTEREST GROUP SESSION—HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTION: PETS IN OLDER ADULTS' SOCIAL NETWORKS: HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTION, INTERPERSONAL CONNECTIONS, AND HEALTHY AGING

Chair: Jessica Bibbo, *Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, Cleveland, Ohio, United States*

Co-Chair: Sandy Branson, *Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth, Houston, Texas, United States*

Discussant: Jessica Bibbo, *Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, Cleveland, Ohio, United States*

Empirical evidence supports positive associations between social support, interpersonal connections, and health as people age. This symposium addresses how human-animal interaction may facilitate connection throughout later life. Each talk presents unique ways pets: fit into social networks; expand interpersonal connections; and thereby, impact health and wellbeing. The first talk presents longitudinal associations of a history of pet ownership and marital status on health, in particular cognitive functioning, over time. The second talk presents qualitative evidence for how pets fit into older adults' social network and quantitative evidence for the impact of animal and interpersonal companionship on overall and functional health. The third talk builds upon the literature linking dog walking with older adults' physical health, by providing evidence for the positive impact of dog walking improving interpersonal connections with neighbors. The fourth talk discusses the influence of a unique intergenerational human-animal interaction service-learning course on university students' attitudes towards older adults and those with disabilities. Enrolled students provide pet care (e.g., brushing, dog walking, delivering pet food and supplies) to low-income pet owners ages 60 and older and disabled adults. Students reported decreased biases towards older adults and those with disabilities after completing the course. The final talk is the first study to focus on the influence of pets in LGBTQ older adults living in rural southern Appalachia. Identifying as a LGBTQ person and living in a rural environment can present unique challenges and these qualitative results provide insight into pets' influence on aging in this understudied population.

OLDER ADULT PET OWNERSHIP HISTORY, MARITAL STATUS, AND HEALTH OUTCOMES: THE WISCONSIN LONGITUDINAL STUDY (WLS)

Alisha Hackney¹ and Erika Friedmann¹, *1. University of Maryland School of Nursing, Baltimore, Maryland, United States*

We explore the association of PO and marital status to changes in health during aging. This secondary analysis uses 1992, 2004, and 2011 data from healthy participants (N=2,319) in the WLS. Health outcomes (symptoms, illnesses, days in bed due to illness, depression, and cognition) and demographic/ health variables (age, marital status, sex, smoking, BMI, engagement with friends/relatives). PO (ever owned a pet/dog/cat) was assessed in 2011. In linear mixed models, PO, dog ownership, and cat ownership (CO) independently predicted changes in health outcomes.

Marital status moderated the association of CO to changes in cognition [$F(1,012.85)=4.09, p=0.043$]. Both marriage and CO were associated with increased cognition from ages 53 to 64; being unmarried without CO was associated with reduced cognition during aging with the lowest cognition by age 70. Results provide insight into how PO and social support influence healthy aging. Longitudinal PO and health/social data are necessary to better understand these relationships.

THE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND: SOCIAL NETWORK COMPOSITIONS, ANIMAL COMPANIONS, AND HEALTH

Raeann G. LeBlanc¹, 1. *University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States*

Animal companionship has been found to be positively related to health, though less is known about the features of social networks that include animal companions and how these relate to health outcomes. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between social network composition including animal companionship and health. A mixed methods cross-sectional descriptive, correlation study design was used. Eighty-nine people age sixty-five and older, living in the community, managing multiple chronic conditions, participated in telephone interviews. Animal companionship was common (42.7%) among the sample (66% lived alone) with at least one animal companion ($M=1.57, SD=.903$) and associated with improved health function (IADL scores) ($r=.234, p=.028$). Animal companionship correlated positively with health (SF12 General Health Scores) ($r=.210, p=.048$). Animal companionship is an important feature in social networks of older people that influences health. Social supports maintain these relationships and the animal human bond.

DOG WALKING MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DOG OWNERSHIP AND NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL INTERACTION

Katie Potter,¹ Hachem Saddiki,² and Laura B. Balzer², 1. *University of Massachusetts Dept of Kinesiology, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States*, 2. *Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States*

Social interaction may be facilitated by dog ownership. We surveyed 421 pet owners about neighborhood social interactions. Dog owners also completed a dog walking questionnaire. Among adults aged 55+ ($n=99$; 62.2 ± 5.6 years; 90% female), we tested our hypotheses that (1) dog owners were more likely to meet neighbors than non-dog owners, and (2) increased dog walking frequency was associated with increased neighborhood social interaction. Inverse probability weighting was used to control for differences in age and neighborhood type (rural, suburban/urban) between groups. The probability of meeting neighbors was 2.4x higher (95%CI: 1.5-3.9) for dog than cat owners, after controlling for age and neighborhood type. Among dog owners, the odds of meeting a neighbor were 1.7x higher (95%CI: 0.9-3.1) with each unit increase in dog walking frequency (unit=5walks/week). Our findings suggest that programming to support dog ownership and dog walking among older adults may help reduce social isolation.

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PARTICIPATION IN AN INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE AND IMPLICIT BIASES

Lori Kogan,¹ Lori Kogan,¹ Regina Schoenfeld-Tacher,² and James Oxley³, 1. *Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, United States*, 2. *North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, United States*, 3. *NA, measham, England, United Kingdom*

Biases against older adults and people with disabilities can lead to discriminatory behaviors. One way to better understand attitudes towards these populations is through the examination of implicit (unconscious) factors. This paper utilizes The Implicit Association Test, a computer-based categorization task designed to assess implicit or unconscious attitudes, to assess the impact of an intergenerational service-learning course created to support the human animal bond between vulnerable pet owners and their companion animals. This study, using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, assessed the impact of college students' interactions with older pet owners on these students' implicit attitudes. Pre- and post-assessment of participating students found statistically significant decreased biases towards older people and people with disabilities after completing the course ($p=.032$). Results from this study suggest that participating in an intergenerational service-learning course centered around the human animal bond can positively affect implicit attitudes towards older adults or people with disabilities.

LGBT OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR PETS IN SOUTHERN APPALACHIA: RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Maureen MacNamara¹, 1. *Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina, United States*

This session reports on older LGBT adults' perspectives of roles that pets played in relation to older adults' aging-in-place experiences. The goal of this study is to advance understanding of the role of pets in the lives of older LGBT adults living in rural communities. The qualitative study used individual, semi-structured interviews with 11 older adults residing in rural Appalachia. Individuals were recruited using purposive sampling techniques, including recruitment through LGBT friendly service providers, a lesbian listserv, and snowball sampling. The majority of respondents reported that pets played a role in social support and some in social capital. One respondent described a utilitarian relationship with animals that is important to understanding the roles animals may play in rural communities in terms of "belongingness". After reviewing study findings, we will provide recommendations for including information about pets in formal social service delivery systems and conclude with implications for future research.

SESSION 1095 (PAPER)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

BARRIERS, FACILITATORS, BENEFITS, AND ENJOYMENT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN MIDDLE-AGED HISPANIC MEN

Ferdinand Delgado,¹ Cheryl DerAnanian,¹ Sonia Vega-Lopez,² Shandel Vega-Soto,¹ Hector Valdez,¹ and Steven Hooker³, 1. *Arizona State*