


Dementia Literacy Issues in the Care of Chinese American Immigrants

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Dear Editor:

We read with interest the article by Choi, Rose, and Friedman (2018) titled “How Is Literacy Being Defined and Measured in Dementia Research? A Scoping Review” and commend the authors for reviewing the current knowledge regarding how literacy is defined and measured in dementia research. Their study showed that only 40% of the included studies defined literacy, but definitions were inconsistent across these studies (Choi et al., 2018). The authors suggest that implications of this study include further research studies to understand the importance of dementia literacy among caregivers and to develop interventions to improve their literacy.

To expand upon the literature review, we provide evidence that shows improving dementia literacy in older Chinese Americans, specifically Chinese American immigrants, would require the use of multiple channels and techniques. There is a deficit of avenues for obtaining dementia knowledge, especially dementia health literacy, in the Asian American community (Tsiang & Woo, 2017). With limited language and health literacy skills, older Chinese American immigrants and their caregivers often face numerous challenges in receiving quality dementia care and education. A dementia awareness campaign in the Chinese American community found that while health fairs may expose Chinese immigrants to the need of obtaining dementia health services, participants were unable to receive culturally competent resources and patient education materials in written Chinese (Woo, 2017). Community talk-based workshops in Chinese language to raise awareness and knowledge on dementia among Chinese American immigrants were successful in recruiting a cohort of participants in an older age bracket typical of developing dementia (Zheng & Woo, 2017). As social media use is slowly becoming commonplace for older Chinese Americans, a study utilized YouTube to upload culturally tailored educational videos related to dementia, and YouTube via machine learning was better at targeting older adults (age older than 65 years) in Year 2 than Year 1 of a 2-year study period (Lam & Woo, 2018).

These studies in combination suggest that there is a huge potential to develop health educational materials to Chinese American immigrants on various venues and platforms to improve dementia literacy. Future prospective

studies should be designed to determine how to effectively promote educational materials regarding financial literacy for older Chinese American adults and caregivers using social media. Of course, as evidenced by this literature review, developing appropriate tools to accurately reflect dementia literacy would be necessary for early dementia detection and prevention.

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