

The South Carolina Center for Gerontology, is a consortium of Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, the Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina State University, the University of South Carolina, Winthrop University, Lander University, Department of Health and Human Services, AARP South Carolina, South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control, South Carolina State Budget & Control Board, South Carolina Hospital Association and South Carolina Silver Haired Legislature. For more information about the Center, please visit our website: <http://cosw.sc.edu/research/12-research/280-south-carolina-center-for-gerontology>

2017

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

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# aging MATTERS

## Director's Message

Dear Colleagues,

As demonstrated by the 2016 Atlantic hurricane season, the rising incidence and intensity of natural and unnatural disasters have created tremendous challenges for emergency management. Morrow (1991) duly pointed that “[p]eople’s vulnerability to disasters is fundamentally a social and community construct.” Very often it is the exact conditions that obstruct people’s capacity to cope with the demands of daily living that also cause them susceptible to the effects of disasters.

Certain groups of people, such as older adults, people with disabilities, and the poor are disproportionately affected by natural disasters. For example, in New Orleans in 2005, 73% of the deaths related to Hurricane Katrina were among individuals aged 60 or above, even though this age group constituted merely 15% of the city’s population. Thus, it has become an increasing priority in emergency management to support and integrate vulnerable persons, especially older adults, into emergency preparedness.

The Senior Planning and Resources for Emergency Preparedness (SENIOR P.R.E.P), sponsored by the Lieutenant Governor’s Office on Aging (LGOA), is a program aimed at raising “awareness of the importance of individual emergency preparedness for South Carolina’s senior population.” The program provides a wealth of information on emergency preparedness and contact for older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Best regards,

Rita Jing-Ann Chou, PhD, MSSW  
Hartford Geriatric Social Work Faculty Scholar  
Associate Professor  
College of Social Work  
University of South Carolina

## Grants (2016)

**Dye, C.** Co-Investigator, Clemson University, J. Davis, PI, (Greenville Health System). “GHS-REACH: A Caregiver Coaching Intervention for High Risk Patient/Caregivers to Extend Dementia Capable Services”. Administration for Community Living. \$1,000,000. 9-1-2015 to 9-1-2018.

**Dye, C.** Consultant, Clemson University, J. Davis, PI, Greenville Health System. “Memory Health Program”. Duke Endowment Foundation. \$90,470. 7/1/14-6/30/17.

**Dye, C.** Co-Investigator, Clemson University. R. Gimbel, PI, Clemson University. Enhancing Health Technology in the PCMH Environment to Activate Chronic Care Patients. USAMRMC/DoD. \$1,220,000. 9-1-2014 – 9-1-2017.

**Dye, C.** Co-Investigator, Clemson University. W. Sherrill (Clemson University) & J. Snow (GHS), Co-PIs. Accountable Communities and Medical Neighborhoods: Accountable Community Coordinator Initiative, a Cooperative Educational and Service Project. Duke Endowment Foundation. \$2,587,824. (6-2015 to 6-2017).

**Friedman, D.B., & Pearson, J.L.** (University of South Carolina/Arnold School of Public Health, Office for the Study of Aging). For the Purchase and Provision of Alzheimer’s Disease Registry Management and Training and Development Related to ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE REGISTRY. SC DHHS, \$967,350 (+ \$967,350 USC cost share), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2019.

**Friedman, D.B., & Pearson, J.L.** (University of South Carolina/Arnold School of Public Health, Office for the Study of Aging). For the Purchase and Provision of Alzheimer’s Disease Registry Management and Training and Development Related to PRIME. SC DHHS, \$99,992, July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

**Hills, W. E., & Karyukhin, E.** (2015-2016). *Peer-to-Peer Dialogue on Behalf of Older Adults: United States and Russia*. USA-Russia, Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program, U.S. Department of State, \$99,956.64.

**Mehta, S.** (Public Health Bachelor’s student, Mentored by **Friedman, D.B.**). Blogging about Dementia: A Way for Caregivers and Patients to be Heard. South Carolina Honors College, Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program, \$3,000, October 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

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Gerontology

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Chair  
Winthrop University

Dr. Meredith J. Uttley  
Lander University

Mr. Sam Waldrep  
SC Department of Health &  
Human Services

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## **Presentations (2016)**

**Amella, E. J., Scott, L. D., Wood, G. L.**  
*Lessons Learned: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Future of Nursing Scholars Program – a Report.* American Association of Colleges of Nursing, Naples FL, 1/16. (panel report).

**Batchelor-Murphy, M., Amella, E., Anderson, R., McConnell, E., Bales, C., Yap, T., Kennerly, S., Silva, S., Barnes, A., Beck, C., & Colon-Emeric, C.** *Supportive hand feeding in dementia: Establishing evidence for three hand feeding techniques.* Sigma Theta Tau International's 27th International Nursing Congress, Cape Town, South Africa. 7/16 (podium).

**Batchelor-Murphy, M., McConnell, E., Amella, E., Anderson, R., Bales, C., Silva, S., Barnes, A., Beck, C., & Colon-Emeric, C.** *Three handfeeding techniques: Innovation in nursing home care for nursing home residents with dementia.* Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association 2016 Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ, 9/16. (podium presentation).

**Bergeron, C.D., Messias, D.K.H., Friedman, D.B., Spencer, S.M., & Miller, S.C.** *Lessons for health professionals: Strategies for enhancing post-fall recovery among older women.* 21st International Council on Women's Health Issues Congress, Baltimore, MD, November 6-9, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Dye C, Zhang L.** (Clemson University). *Needs assessment for a community-based social engagement program for elderly with ADRD and their family caregivers.* American Academy of Health Behavior Scientific Meeting. Ponte Vedra Beach. FL. Feb 21-24, 2016. Presentation and published abstract.

**Dye C, Williams J, Evatt J.** *Activating Patients for Sustained Chronic Disease Self-Management: Thinking beyond Clinical Outcomes.* (Clemson University). American Academy of Health Behavior Scientific Meeting. Ponte Vedra Beach. FL. Feb 21-24, 2016. Presentation and published abstract.

**Friedman, D.B.** *Community perceptions and knowledge about aging: A focus on brain health and cancer prevention.* University of South Carolina-Advancing Diversity in Aging Research (SC-ADAR) Undergraduate Program, Columbia SC, July 19, 2016.

**Friedman, D.B.** *What do people know and think about cognitive aging?* Healthy Brain Research Network Scholar Webinar and Interactive Learning Session, June 7, 2016 (Invited Speaker; Online Session).

**Friedman, D.B., Wilcox, S., Levkoff, S.E., Hunter, R.H., Gibson, A., Tang, W., & Kannaley, K.** *The South Carolina Healthy Brain Research Network: Eliminating disparities and promoting cognitive health through education and empowerment.* The 9th Annual James E. Clyburn Health Disparities Lecture, Columbia, SC, April 1, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Friedman, D.B., Wilcox, S., Levkoff, S.E., Hunter, R.H., Gibson, A., Tang, W., Kannaley, K., & Mehta, S.** *South Carolina Healthy Brain Research Network.* Arnold School of Public Health 40th Anniversary, Columbia, SC, March 18, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Gibson, A., Friedman, D.B., Torres, W., Irizarry, J., Rodrigez, J., Tang, W., & Kannaley, K.** *Increasing Alzheimer's disease awareness through social media: A Puerto Rico case study.* 12th Annual South Carolina Aging Research Day, Charleston, SC, February 26, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Gimbel, R., Williams, J., Chen, L., Dye, C., Edwards, K., Little, J., Newton, T.**

(Clemson University). Enhancing Health technology in the DoD's PCMH environment to activate type-2 diabetes patients. Poster presented at the 2016 AMSUS Annual Continuing Education Meeting, National Harbor, MD, November 29 – December 2, 2016.

**Hills, W. E., & Karyukhin, E. V.** (2016, invitation). *The everyday life of the older adult in Russia: Looking behind the curtain*. 2016 Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 16, 2016.

**Hills, W. E.** (2016). *Dobroe Delo, a "Kind Deed", indeed! Home delivery of gerontology services for Russian Victims of Repression*. Association for Gerontology in Higher Education 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Education Leadership Conference, Long Beach, CA, March 3-6, 2016.

**Mehta, S., & Friedman, D.B.** Blogging about Alzheimer's disease: A way for caregivers to be heard. University of South Carolina Discovery Day, Columbia SC, April 22, 2016 (Oral Presentation).

**Pearson, J.L.** Long-term care in South Carolina. The 2016 Argentum-SC Annual Convention, Myrtle Beach, SC, October 3-5, 2016 (Oral Presentation).

**Pearson, J.L.** The aging population in South Carolina: Social and fiscal considerations. SC House Ways & Means Committee, Columbia, SC, September 19, 2016 (Oral Presentation).

**Smith, M. P.** Dementia-capable care. Is it worth your investment? The 2016 Argentum-SC Annual Convention, Myrtle Beach, SC, October 3-5, 2016 (Oral Presentation).

**Smith, M. P., Guest, A.** Dissemination of a dementia education program for caregivers and practitioners: The Dementia Dialogues program, 11<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Kentucky Center for Clinical and Translational Science Spring Conference and College of Public Health Research Day - Lexington, KY 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Smith, M.P., Guest, A.** Dementia Dialogues: Empowering South Carolina's caregivers through education and training, Aging in America Conference – Washington, DC 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Tang, W., Friedman, D.B., Kannaley, K., & Edwards, V.J.** Comparing intention to be screened and disclose Alzheimer's disease diagnosis: Alzheimer's caregivers versus other caregivers. Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Denver CO, August 4-7, 2016 (Oral Symposium Presentation).

**Tang, W., Gibson, A., Friedman, D.B., Torres, W., Irizarry, J., Rodriguez, J., & Kannaley, K.** An evaluation of the Puerto Rico Un Café por el Alzheimer program. 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, New Orleans, LA, November 16-20, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Tang, W., Gibson, A., & Friedman, D.B.** Aging in place in Columbia, South Carolina: Preliminary analysis of The FriendShip 501(c)(3) Village. University of South Carolina Graduate Student Day, Columbia, SC, April 8, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Tang, W., Kannaley, K., Friedman, D.B., Edwards, V.J., Wilcox, S., Levkoff, S.E., Hunter, R.H., Irmiter, C., & Belza, B.** How worried are you about getting dementia or Alzheimer's disease? An analysis of national survey data. 12<sup>th</sup> Annual South Carolina Aging

Research Day, Charleston, SC, February 26, 2016 (Poster Presentation).

**Waters, L., Ansello, E., Holdsworth, J., Arun, O., Takahashi, R., Hills, W., Misra, S., Devi, S.** (2016). *Gerontology and geriatrics education around the world: Creating a palette of cultural contexts*. Association for Gerontology in Higher Education 42nd Annual Meeting and Education Leadership Conference symposium, Long Beach, CA, March 3-6, 2016.

## **Publications (2016)**

**Bell, C. L., Lopez, R. P., Mahendra, N., Tamai, A., Davis, J., Amella, E. J., & Masaki, K.** (2016). Person-centered feeding care: A protocol to re-introduce oral feeding for nursing home patients with tube feeding. *Journal of Nutrition Health & Aging*, 20(6), 621-627.

**Bergeron, C.D., Messias, D.K.H., Friedman, D.B., Spencer, S.M., & Miller, S.C.** (2016 Dec 29 Epub). Involvement of family members and professionals in older women's post-fall decision making. *Health Communication*, 1-8.  
doi:10.1080/10410236.2016.1255844

**Bergeron, C.B., Friedman, D.B., Spencer, S.M., Messias, D.K.H., Miller, S.C., & McKeever, R.** (2016 June 8 Epub). An exploratory survey of older women's post-fall decisions. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*.  
doi:10.1177/0733464816653361

**Bergeron, C.D., Friedman, D.B., Messias, D.K.H., Spencer, S.M., & Miller, S.C.** (2016 Apr 6 Epub). Older women's responses and decisions after a fall: The work of getting "back to normal". *Health Care for Women International*.

doi:10.1080/07399332.2016.1173039

**Dye, C., Williams, J., Evatt, J. H.** Activating Patients for Sustained Chronic Disease Self-Management: Thinking Beyond Clinical Outcomes. 2016. *Journal of Primary Care and Community Health*. 2016.  
DOI:10.1177/2150131915626562.  
<http://jpc.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/2150131915626562v1.pdf?ijkey=hP830irxs1F50mH&keytype=finite>

**Fraser, A., Getty, M., Amella, E., & Mueller, M.** (2016.) *Cooking Healthy, Eating Smart: A strategically-timed formative evaluation of a community-based nutrition and food safety program for rural older adults*. *Journal of Extension*. 54(3):3IAW2.

**Friedman, D.B., Gibson, A., Torres, W., Irizarry, J., Rodriguez, J., Tang, W., & Kannaley, K.** (2016). Increasing community awareness about Alzheimer's disease in Puerto Rico through coffee shop education and social media. *Journal of Community Health*, 41(5), 1006-1012. doi:10.1007/s10900-016-0183-9

**Guest, M.A., Miller, M., Smith, M., Hyleman, B.** (2016). Office for The Study of Aging at The University of South Carolina: Promoting healthy aging through program development, evaluation, education/training and research for South Carolina's older adults. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*.

**Getty, M., Jesch, E., Mueller, M., Amella, E. J., Fraser, A.** (2016). Differences in medical and life-style risk factors for malnutrition in limited-resource older adults in a rural U.S. state. *Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*. 20(2), 121-7. PMID:26812507

**Johnson, S. A., Eleazer, G. P., Rondina, M. T.** (2016). Pathogenesis, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Venous Thromboembolism in Older Adults. *J*

*Am Geriatr Soc.*, 64(9):1869-78. doi:  
10.1111/jgs.14279. Epub 2016 Aug 24.

**Nair, J.M., Nemeth, L. S., Sommers, L. M., Newman, S., Amella, E.** (2016). Alcohol use, misuse, and abuse among nursing students: A photovoice study. *Journal of Addictions Nursing*, 27(1), 12-23.

**O'Brien, T., Jenkins, C., Amella, E., Mueller, M., Talbot, L., Moore, M., & Troutman-Jordan, M.** (2016) An internet assisted weight loss program intervention for older obese rural women. *Research in Gerontological Nursing*. 34(11), 513-519.

**Pan X, Lee Y, Dye C, Theriot S.** (2016). Financial Care for Older Adults with Dementia: Characteristics of Adult Children Caregivers (IJAHD-16-0065) *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*. DOI:  
10.1177/0091415016685327.

**Sell, K., Amella, E. J., Mueller, M., Andrews, J. & Wachs, J.** (2016). Chronic disease self-management and behavior change attitudes in older adults: A mixed-method feasibility study. *SAGE Open* 6(3), 1-9. DOI: 10.1177/2158244016665661

**Sell, K., Amella, E., Mueller, M., Andrews, J., & Wachs, J.** (2016). Use of Social Cognitive Theory to assess salient clinical research in chronic disease self-management for older adults: An integrative review. *Open Journal of Nursing*, 6(3) DOI:  
10.4236/ojn.201

**Smith, L., Amella, E. J., & Nemeth, L.** (2016). Perceptions of home health nurses regarding suffering, artificial nutrition and hydration in late stage dementia. *Home Health Nurse*, 34(9), 478-84.

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## Grants Application Information

### **ARCC Grant Application Information**

The Alzheimer's Resource Coordination Center (ARCC) within the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging is pleased to announce a solicitation for Alzheimer's services program grants for the grant year beginning July 1, 2017. The ARCC is requesting grant applications for respite care services as well as educational interventions for persons with Alzheimer's disease and Related Disorders (ADRD), their families, and caregivers. For more information, please click [here](#).

### **ElderCare Trust Fund**

The ElderCare Trust Fund supports small community-based programs throughout South Carolina that help seniors stay in their communities. Join us and help seniors stay in their homes by checking Line 28 of your 2016 South Carolina Income Tax Return and completing [Form I-330](#). Remember: "*It's not too late to check Line 28!*" If your organization has a program which accomplishes the mission of the ElderCare Trust Fund by helping seniors to live in their communities with dignity and vitality, click [here](#) for a grant application information packet.

### **2017 PIP Application**

The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (LGOA) will accept applications for the Permanent Improvement Project (PIP) grant program from February 1 – 28, 2017. Completed applications must be submitted to the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for approval before the LGOA will consider the project application. Applications not approved by an AAA will not be accepted/considered. Applicants must fully understand the PIP guidelines and requirements before submitting applications. The LGOA will award grants, based on available funding, once a thorough review process is completed. The application is available for download [here](#).  
(South Carolina Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging)

## Conference Information

### 2017 Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) Annual Conference



Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel  
Located in the heart of Downtown Greenville, SC

#### Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging



The Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) was organized in 1973 by several Area Agencies in the Southeast Region, which included representatives from

eight states and was a result of their concern over national and regional issues facing Area Agencies on Aging attempting to establish viable programs for the elderly.

The major thrust of the initiatives in establishing the Association centered around problem solving, training, and dissemination of information pertinent to assisting Area Agencies on Aging in implementing, improving, and/or expanding comprehensive and coordinated services for older people throughout the Southeast.

One of the major goals established for the Association was to coordinate an Annual Training Conference region-wide. This thrust has continued throughout the existence of the Association. It provides the mechanisms necessary to promote skill development, professional knowledge, best practice sharing, and information exchange.

#### Issues of Special Interest

- Managed Care
- Care Transitions
- Chronic Disease Self-Management
- Caregiving
- Technology in Aging Health & Wellness
- Medicare Education
- Civic Engagement
- Livable Communities
- Nutrition/Malnutrition
- Medication Management
- Evidence-Based Programs
- Patient Navigation
- Caregiver Supports & Services

The South Carolina Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SC4A) has the privilege of hosting the 2017 Southeastern Association of Agencies on Aging (SE4A) Annual Training Conference. This event will take place September 10-13 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Downtown Greenville, South Carolina. We look forward to our colleagues from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia joining us as we highlight many of the innovations in the field of aging.

**Questions?** Please Contact Cindy Curtis at 803-744-5134 Office (direct), 803-376-5390 (main) or [ccurtis@centralmidlands.org](mailto:ccurtis@centralmidlands.org).



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## Agency News



### **SCARN's 13th Annual Aging Research Day**

The South Carolina Aging Research Network (SCARN) held its 13th annual conference, themed "Technology Supports for Aging in Place" on April 7, 2017, at the Hilton Columbia Center in downtown Columbia. We were pleased to have Dr. Meera Narasimhan, Professor and Associate Provost of Health Sciences at USC, Professor and Chair of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the USC School of Medicine, as our keynote speaker, who presented on "Telehealth and Innovative Technology: Tools to Address the Growing Needs of the Elderly." In addition to Dr. Meera Narasimhan, junior and senior faculty from USC, MUSC, and Clemson showcased their exciting research in the area of technology and innovation in support of Aging-in-Place. We were also excited that Mr. Darryl Broome, State Director of the South Carolina Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging, spoke on the future of the South Carolina Aging Population.

(Ms. Eliza Ballou, The South Carolina Aging Research Network)

### **Office for the Study of Aging Gets New Leadership & Website**

Arnold School of Public Health administrators Drs. Daniela Friedman and Lee Pearson will lend their collective leadership and expertise in aging issues to the Arnold School's Office for the Study of Aging (OSA) as co-directors.

Associate Professor Dr. Mindi Spencer has been a faculty affiliate and researcher with OSA since joining the Arnold School of Public Health. She will serve as the Associate Director of Research for the new OSA team. New Office for the Study of Aging Website has been launched. Link to the website:

[http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/public\\_health/research/research\\_centers/office\\_for\\_the\\_study\\_of\\_aging/index.php](http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/research/research_centers/office_for_the_study_of_aging/index.php)

(Dr. Daniela Friedman)

### **Office for the Study of Aging helps develop HUGS program training for Leeza's Care Connection**

The Office for the Study of Aging partners with an array of organizations and agencies that focus on aging, such as Leeza's Care Connection. Working with Leeza's Care Connection and Lexington Medical Center staff, OSA also contributed to the development of a training program for a key component of the new Columbia center. Macie Smith helped develop and facilitate a portion of the training for the ambassadors that focused on successful caregiving tips, such as identifying caregiver burnout, reducing caregiver stress, and compassionate caregiving.

[http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/public\\_health/about/news/2016/osa\\_hugs.php](http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/about/news/2016/osa_hugs.php)

(Dr. Macie Smith)

## Senior Fraud Alert

The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging has been alerted to a scam in South Carolina involving lotteries and sweepstake contests that targets senior citizens. If you, or a loved one, ever receive a letter or telephone call announcing that you have won the lottery or a sweepstakes contest -- DO NOT PROVIDE ANY PERSONAL OR FINANCIAL INFORMATION. For more information, visit our [Senior Fraud](#) page.

(South Carolina Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging)

## The South Carolina Vulnerable Adult Guardian ad Litem Program (SCVAGAL)

In 2015, in South Carolina, Adult Protect Services (APS) received over 4,900 reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. Six hundred of these reports resulted in court proceedings. The South Carolina Vulnerable Adult Guardian ad Litem Program (SCVAGAL) provides guardians ad litem to advocate for the best interest of these adults once they are placed into DSS custody. SCVAGAL started as a pilot program at the Office for the Study of Aging within the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina. On May 16, 2016, Governor Nikki Haley signed legislation making the program part of the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (LGOA). The program has flourished and now serves all counties of South Carolina.

SCVAGAL's relocation to the LGOA on July 1, 2016 has allowed the team of advocates to access programs, services, and resources within the LGOA. SCVAGAL is excited to be part of a team that is committed to serving older adults in the state of South Carolina. SCVAGAL continues to recruit more volunteers to serve as guardians ad litem. In 2016, SCVAGAL facilitated four volunteer trainings and recruited 22 volunteers to serve as guardians ad litem across the state. SCVAGAL is scheduled to present at the National Association of Social Workers Symposium on

March 20, 2017 and is **currently in the process of recruiting social work interns** to help recruit volunteers and to serve as guardians ad litem.

(Ms. Emily Walker, Upstate Regional Coordinator, SC Vulnerable Adult Guardian ad Litem Program)

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## Other News

### **Non-Governmental Support for Older Adult Care in Russia**

Most countries of the world today recognize their place as stakeholders in the phenomenon of global aging and are making policy adjustments to account for rapidly increasing numbers and percentages of older adults. The type and urgency of the adjustments, however, are seen as a function of an individual country's relative demographic profile, economic situation, and unique history regarding the status of older adults in the family and community. These variations in response to global aging imperatives make cross-cultural projects important by providing opportunities for countries to learn from one another. In fall 2016, Coastal Carolina University completed work on a grant-funded project examining older adult health care in the Russian Federation. The project, funded by the U.S. Department of State under the U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Grant Program, included linking gerontology professionals of the U.S. and Russia to promote the exchange of best practices information for service development and delivery.

To accomplish this exchange of ideas, two teams of eight gerontology healthcare professionals were formed: one from the U.S., and one from Russia. Selections of participants for each team were made to allow discipline-specific

interactions, such that physician-to-physician, nurse-to-nurse, and social worker-to-social worker interactions were possible. Travel itineraries were then developed and coordinated to allow the U.S. and Russia gerontology experts to travel abroad and witness first-hand the provision of health-related services in another country.

The short-term exchange, travel visits took place during the month of June 2016: from June 3-15, a team of U.S. gerontology professionals, all from South Carolina, including a physician, a psychologist, two social workers, three nurses, and a videographer, examined service delivery for older adults in Moscow, Vologda, and Pskov, Russia; from June 18-28, the corresponding team of Russian gerontology specialists, including a physician, a social worker, a nurse, an attorney, a psychologist, and three Third Age University program developers/managers visited Myrtle Beach, Conway, and Columbia, South Carolina to examine older adult service delivery in the U.S. In both the U.S. and Russia, team members enjoyed service delivery site visits, numerous presentation opportunities to provide best practice information for colleagues, and ongoing discussions through the exchanges of similarities and differences in best practices. These back-to-back, highly informative, short-term exchanges allowed gerontology experts from the U.S. and Russia to establish and conduct peer-to-peer dialogues to: better understand one another, better understand best practices for service delivery to older adults in light of unique historical and cultural differences, and form relationships for future collaborations.

A requirement of the grant, initially thought to provide a challenge for itinerary development turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Because of economic sanctions in place for U.S.-Russian interactions, the U.S. Department of State-sponsored grant could not include the transferal of U.S. Federal funds to anyone with Russian government ties. This regulation on such events as participation in workshops and conferences even extended to include conversations with individuals, such as physicians, nurses, and professors,

who received a significant portion of their salaries from the Russian government. Consequently, the travel and work itineraries for the U.S. team in Russia were focused on interactions with non-governmental entities and individuals. This proved fortuitous as the Russian government has publically recognized that it does not have the resources to care for a rapidly growing older adult population, and is currently promoting the development of older adult services in the direction of public, private, and social organizations that are independent of government funding.

A traditional collective value in Russia, derived from its Eastern heritage, is that of inclusion and reliance on family and community care for older adults. The rapid development of service systems in this direction for Russia is promoted by several factors, including: the willingness of more traditional communities, particularly those outside major urban areas such as Moscow and St. Petersburg, to embrace the concept of family/community responsibility for older citizens; the history of Russia, which has promoted a spirit of make-do, whereby Russians are accustomed to being creative utilizing few or no resources; and, the lack of a highly developed government-sponsored infrastructure for older adult care to slow momentum for development of alternative forms of service delivery.

One significant difference noted for the countries was the degree to which government interests have guided the direction and development of services to this point in time: The U.S. has a highly developed, government-organized aging network and payment system, from which hybrid and independent, public and private, entities are emerging. Russia is virtually starting from scratch; the retirement center model, developed during Soviet times for pensioners with no other sources of support, currently serves approximately 20% of older adults and is being phased out in favor of non-governmental entities.

In both countries, but especially in Russia, government-provided pensions are insufficient and must be supplemented by alternative forms of service development and delivery. The Moscow times reported in 2015, when the ruble was stronger than today that the average pensioner in Russia received 12,900 rubles/month; this amount converted to \$240/month in June 2015. By February 22, 2016, 12,900 rubles was valued at \$170.21 USD. Beyond the nursing centers, an additional 40% of older adults in Russia have family; 40% have no family support and live independently.

The Russian government, through a Federal law in 2015, is providing tax incentives and removing bureaucratic obstacles in support of a five-year aging plan to allow the development of a market for services provided in the social, non-governmental sectors of society. This is a first for Russia as virtually all options for older adult services prior to this were developed and delivered by the government. Efforts are also underway in Russia to motivate people to work longer; these include government-directed pension reform to include employee contributions, incentives to encourage employers to hire and retain older workers, and incentives to allow older adults to develop private enterprises. In response, communities are organizing educational and practical programs to assess and provide resources for older persons, many of whom must be active to obtain sustenance necessary for survival.

It may be premature to make pronouncements concerning the success of any efforts, but it is certainly fair to say that the Russians are working hard to help themselves and are appreciative of international interactions allowing for the exchange of ideas and information. Professionals from the U.S. and Russia took extensive notes and lots of pictures to illustrate differences and similarities in how services are conceptualized and delivered, and ongoing presentations comparing and contrasting the care systems have been very well received in both countries.

(William E. Hills, Ph.D., M.S.W, Professor of

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## **Forums on Careers in Aging for Social Workers: There is a Career in Aging Waiting for YOU!**



In honor of the Healthy Aging Month in September last year and to enhance student interests in gerontology, the Aging Specialization Faculty at the College of Social Work, University of South Carolina was pleased to hold a month-long Forum Series that focused on career opportunities in aging for social workers. We invited all students to join us for great conversation and pizza. The forum topics were:

- Sept. 6 – Government/AARP  
(Coordinator/Moderator: Katherine Leith, PhD)
- Sept. 13 – Hospice  
(Coordinator/Moderator: Sue Levkoff, PhD)
- Sept. 20 – Case Management/Care Coordination (Coordinator/Moderator: Nicole Cavanagh, PhD)
- Sept. 27 – Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC)  
(Coordinator/Moderator: Rita J. Chou, PhD).

(Aging Specialization Faculty Committee,  
College of Social Work, University of South  
Carolina)

# aging MATTERS

We are excited to present this electronic 2017 issue of the Aging Matters Newsletter. We welcome your suggestions and comments. If you wish to submit aging related items for future issues please email them to Dr. Rita J. Chou at [rjchou@sc.edu](mailto:rjchou@sc.edu)

*Aging Matters*, the newsletter of the South Carolina Center for Gerontology, College of Social Work, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208

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## New Subscribers Wanted

If you think someone else may be interested in receiving this electronic newsletter, please ask him or her to email: Dr. Rita J. Chou [rjchou@sc.edu](mailto:rjchou@sc.edu), with his/her full name, occupation/position, and name of organization/agency/business. Thank you.