GSA Assembles Experts to Address Older Adults’ Sleep Health

Following the success of its recent project on over-the-counter (OTC) medication-taking behaviors of older adults, GSA is now setting its sights on understanding and optimizing older adults’ OTC sleep aid use and sleep health.

With support from Pfizer Consumer Health, GSA has initiated a collaboration of stakeholders — from the public and private sectors; trade, professional, and advocacy organizations; and academia — to raise awareness of issues and risks related to OTC sleep aid use in older adults.

Additionally, the initiative will focus on how to better educate consumers, health care providers, and others on the responsible use of OTC sleep aids and their connection to the anticholinergic burden of medications in community-dwelling older adults.

New Centers to Focus on Enhanced Geriatric Social Work Training

The Hartford/GSA National Center on Gerontological Social Work Excellence has named Hunter College, the University of Southern California, and the University of Washington as the newest locations of Hartford Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Social Work. Among these centers’ many activities, they will focus on building relationships with local health and social service professionals, and form regional consortia of social work field agencies serving older adults to support skill-building opportunities for personnel.

The National Center was established through a three-year, $1.35 million grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation to GSA in February 2013. Nora O'Brien-Suric, PhD, is serving as the foundation’s senior program officer for this grant.

“The new centers will improve the interface between practice and academia in order to strengthen the services that improve the health of older people,” said O'Brien-Suric. “They will achieve this by building upon the work that the foundation has supported for more than a decade in the areas of practice, education, and academic leadership development.”

The Hartford Center at Hunter College will be led by GSA Fellow Carmen Morano, PhD, who also serves as co-director of the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work and managing editor of the Journal of Gerontological Social Work. GSA member Karen Lincoln, PhD, will lead the Hartford Center at the University of Washington, where she currently is the associate director of the Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging. And GSA Fellow Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD, will lead the Hartford Center at the University of Southern California, where she currently is the associate director of the Edward R. Roybal Institute for Multigenerational Health.

“Research suggests that sleep health is central to many components of healthy aging,” Albert said. “Sleep disturbances may increase the risk of depression. Poor sleep is also associated with...”

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The Year in Review: Major Projects Expand GSA’s Reach

By James Appleby, RPh, MPH
jappleby@geron.org

GSAs Annual Scientific Meeting offers a great opportunity to reflect on what we’ve achieved over the past year, and our organization has a lot to show for itself in 2013. So as we head to New Orleans, I want to share some of the more noteworthy successes and thank the GSA members who helped make them possible.

GSA Welcomes Change AGEnts: With a major grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation, GSA launched the Hartford Change AGEnts Initiative, a multi-year project designed to create change in the practice environment that will improve the health of older adults, their families, and communities. This initiative is built upon alumni from other Hartford-funded projects, several of which GSA has overseen.

Grant Strengthens Outlook for Social Work Practice: Building on the GSA-administered Hartford Geriatric Social Work Initiative (HGSWI), we received a grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation to establish the Hartford/GSA National Center on Social Work Excellence — allowing us to reaffirm our commitment to the health care needs of older adults through adequate social work support.

Vaccination Initiative Expands: GSA’s National Adult Vaccination Program (NAVP), launched in 2011, raises awareness of the health benefits of immunizations. We now have five outside organizations providing support for this initiative and an August summit yielded a white paper on best practices and state and national policies impacting adult vaccination rates.

GSA Takes Lead on Over-the-Counter Medication Projects: Following the precedent set with the NAVP, GSA firmly established itself this year as a convener of multiple stakeholders for projects on under-researched areas in the field of aging. Through workgroups, summits, and white papers in 2013, we shed light on over-the-counter medication behaviors of older adults and over-the-counter sleep aids and sleep health in older adults.

Journals Outperform Competitors: For the third consecutive year, The Journals of Gerontology, Series A: Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences placed first in impact factor rankings in the gerontology category as reported by Journal Citation Reports: Social Sciences Edition. The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences and The Gerontologist took the fifth and seventh spots, respectively. GSA also renewed its contract with publishing partner Oxford University Press to continue the momentum of the journals’ success.

GSA Co-Sponsors GSIG Summit: We teamed up with the Alliance for Aging Research and the Trans-NIH Geroscience Interest Group (GSIG) at the National Institutes of Health to present Advances in Geroscience: Impact on Healthspan and Chronic Disease, a scientific summit held in late October. There, scientific experts discussed the extent to which the physiological effects of aging represent a common risk factor for chronic diseases.

Journalism Program’s Coverage Spreads: The MetLife Foundation Journalists in Aging Fellows Program entered its fourth year and added 17 new participants for a total of 65 alumni. This group has collectively produced over 200 stories — largely based on the fellows’ exposure to the research and expertise of GSA members — and more are on the way from the Annual Scientific Meeting.

Conference Extends Reach into Business Sector: GSA cultivated new opportunities to serve the aging marketplace through Healthy Aging Means Business, a consultative conference held in July. Based on workshops previously held at GSA’s Annual Scientific Meeting, we created this stand-alone event (the first in a potential regional series) to share the accumulated knowledge of our members with business leaders who need reliable, evidence-based information about the aging market.

From the Executive Director

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GSA Delegation Attends Chinese Meeting

Four members recently represented GSA at the Chinese Congress on Gerontology and Health Industry, which was held by the Chinese Geriatrics Society in Suzhou, China, from September 13 to 15. The delegation consisted of Paul Arthur, MS, of the University of Florida; Tina Maschi, PhD, of the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service; Migette Kaup, PhD, of Kansas State University; and Catherine D’Amico, PhD, of the Roseman University of Health Sciences. They were selected based upon abstracts they submitted after a Society-wide call was issued in May. Gsa Controller Jilan Chen accompanied the group. Former GSA President Roger McCarter, PhD, of The Pennsylvania State University delivered the keynote address at the Congress.

Dassel Joins GIP as Co-Director

Kara Bottiggi Dassel, PhD, a former chair of GSA’s Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization, recently joined the Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program (GIP) within the College of Nursing at the University of Utah as co-director and an associate professor. She joins a team of eight distinguished faculty members with interests ranging from bereavement and caregiving to fall prevention. Dassel’s contribution to the program involves researching and teaching in the area of aging and cognition; specifically diagnostic indicators and functional outcomes of Alzheimer’s disease. The GIP is comprised of approximately 100 undergraduate and graduate students and offers multiple degree options including: undergraduate and graduate certificates, an undergraduate minor, and a Master’s of Science degree.

Kaye and Gugliucci Receive NIH Grant

Co-principal investigators Lenard Kaye, PhD, and Marilyn Gugliucci, PhD, were awarded a grant of $380,000 from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study a falls prevention program. The study will focus on the effectiveness of the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNECOM) Balancing Act Program, a self-initiated falls prevention program that aims to improve balance and reduce falls. The program requires only one training session and can then be done at home with no equipment or further instruction. Research findings will be disseminated among human service organizations through networks such as the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Maine Gerontological Society. Gugliucci is GSA’s current Health Sciences Section chair and a past president of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.
Membership Drive Extends GSA Family

During September’s Membership Month, GSA awarded $25 Amazon.com gift cards to anyone who referred a new member to join the Society. As a result, 112 new people were recruited! GSA congratulates all the participants and extends a warm welcome to its newest members. The gift card winners are listed below.

Kristin August (referred John Abbamonte)  Sandra Davis (referred Bernie McCarthy)
Gregory Hicks (referred Victoria Allen)  Roma Hanks (referred Hosik Min)
Heidi Tissenbaum (referred Ankita Bansal)  Kenneth Ferraro (referred Ranjini Mohan)
Carmen Lee (referred Margaret Borowiak)  Lisa Skemp (referred Lindsay Mullins)
Elisabeth Handing (referred Sharon Brande)  Regina Sims (referred Denee Mwenda)
Marlene Stum (referred George Brisse)  Ikuko Kitamura (referred Chizuru Nagata)
Richard Zweig (referred Diana Bronshstein)  Karen Ross (referred Amy Nielsen)
Jocelyn Chen Wise (referred Eve Byrd)  Frank Lin (referred Carrie Nieman)
Derek Isaacowitz (referred Molly Cannon)  Rebecca Davis (referred Jennifer Ohman)
Frank Lin (referred David Chen)  Michelle Gray (referred Sally Paulson)
Rebecca Dillard (referred Jocelyn Chen Wise)  J. Jill Suitor (referred Siyun Peng)
Aaron Hagedorn (referred Zhaowen Cheng)  Gayle Hersch (referred Erin Peterson)
Beverly Gwen Windham (referred Alyssa Gamaldo)  Mark A Supiano (referred Anne Peterson)
Donna Wagner (referred Mariana Cole)  Jeff Laguna (referred Jaclyn Portanova)
Cynthia LaCoe (referred Heather Collins)  Cynthia Jacek (referred Alyson Prokop)
David Ekerdt (referred Fernando Coto-Yglesias)  Carol Rogers (referred Angela Ramey)
Carla VandeWeerd (referred Martha Coulter)  Melinda Stanley (referred Katherine Ramos)
Ruth Lamont (referred Liseth Cuthbert)  Joe Mikels (referred David Roalf)
Gayle Hersch (referred Kathryn Davis)  Allison Muma (referred Patricia Rowan)
Nancy Henkin (referred Jeffrey Draine)  Louis Medviren (referred Amanda Runyan)
Rebecca Dreyer (referred Evan Dreyer)  Christopher Rosnick (referred Luciana Sabatino)
Darcy McMaughan (referred Rachel Edwards)  Diane Houlton (referred Mary Schleeter)
Emily Greenfield (referred James Fedor)  Susanne Iwarsson (referred Steven Schmidt)
Yael Zweig (referred James Galvin)  Natasha Nitro (referred Amy Schuster)
Bill Haley (referred Alyssa Gamaldo)  Todd Manini (referred Carolyn Scott)
Frank Lin (referred Dane Genter)  Nicole Ruggiano (referred Natalia Shtompel)
Soonhee Roh (referred Jarod Giger)  Julie Hicks-Patrick (referred Nicole Silva)
Phyllis Greenberg (referred April Greene)  Liesbeth De Donder (referred An-Sofie Smetcoren)
Jeanine Yonashiro Cho (referred Molli Grossman)  Gayle Hersch (referred Theresa Smith)
Lawren Bercaw (referred Lisa Gurgone)  Brian M. Ludwin (referred Ronald Smith)
Kate de Medeiros (referred Laura Hahn)  Mari Plikuhn (referred Sarah Spalding)
Roberta Greene (referred Shira Hantman)  Clemens Tesch-Römer (referred Svenja Spuling)
Leanne LeFler (referred Kimberly Hayman)  Katherine Marx (referred Ian Stanley)
Jordan Lewis (referred Julia Herbert)  Fiona Alpas (referred Chris Stephens)
Rosemary McCaslin (referred Laura Hernandez)  Carmen Lee (referred Mary Stern)
Mary Mittelman (referred John Hobday)  Frank Lin (referred Yoon-kyu Sung)
John Cagle (referred Seokho Hong)  Jyoti Savla (referred Andrea Swenson)
David Marquez (referred Sarah Janicek)  Melissa Powers (referred Terry Taylor)
Ada Mui (referred Nan Jiang)  Joan Monin (referred Jennifer Tomlinson)
David Ekerdt (referred David Johnson)  Sherry Cummings (referred Shannon Tischmayer)
Peter Martin (referred Meneka Johnson)  Michelle Gray (referred Jennifer Vincenzo)
Rosalie Otters (Natalie Jones)  Mary Beth Happ (referred Tania Von Visger)
Carmen Lee (referred Koko Kawasaki)  Juanjuan Sun (referred Wuyi Wang)
Richard Allman (referred Richard Kennedy)  Huajuan Chen (referred Yi Wang)
Kristen Porter (referred Krystal Kirtle)  Nancy Morrow-Howell (referred Dongmin Wang)
Thomas Meuser (referred Catherine Klostermeier)  Jeanine Yonishiro-Cho (referred Diana Wang)
Deborah DiGilio (referred Patricia Kobor)  Todd Manini (referred Amal Wanigatunga)
David Ekerdt (referred Cathryn Koss)  Christine Jensen (referred Lacy Will)
Linda Noelker (referred Phyllis Laht)  Pei Chen (referred Lynn Wilson)
Hannah Swift (referred Ruth Lamont)  Lydia Manning (referred Vida Wojewski)
Carmen Lee (referred Merijane Lee)  Rowena Tsang (referred Maan Worsley)
Tirth Raj Bhatta (referred Nirmala Lekhak)  Christopher M. Kelly (referred Janie York)
Mindy Katz (referred Richard Lipton)  Lan Yao (referred J. Michael Younger)
Cynthia Brown (referred Alexander Lo)  Hong Mi (referred Fan Zhang)
Crystal Bennett (referred Rita Lucena)  Helene Fung (referred Fan Zhang)
Louis Bherer (referred Maxime Lussier)  Brian Kaskie (referred Shawn Zierke)
Thirteen Years of Successful Leadership Training Enters Next Phase

The final cohort of the Hartford Policy Leadership Institute (PLI) was sharing a meal and networking at the Monocle restaurant on Capitol Hill. The maître d’s hustled a group of lawmakers through the dimly-lit restaurant and set them up at the other end of the dining room. Smoke wafted beneath the makeshift wall separating the two spaces. It was the evening of October 16 and the speaker of the House of Representatives was having a meal and a cigarette before addressing his colleagues on the floor of the House chamber. The government shutdown of 2013 was about to become history.

The 16-day shutdown was a dramatic backdrop for a program that prides itself on preparing leaders in the fields of geriatric social work and medicine for policy action and impact. What a fascinating example of one of the three P’s of the legislative world: policy — being subsumed by the other two P’s — politics and process. As the institute participants learned during their two-day intensive, knowledge of all three is critical to advocacy success.

The PLI has been a groundbreaking program of the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Faculty Scholars Program, funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation. The goal of the program is to develop leaders in the areas of geriatric social work. Part of the leadership development includes the concept of disseminating research and practice knowledge beyond the clinical or academic setting to the legislative and regulatory arenas. The PLI has enabled 200 researchers to step out of their comfort zones and begin to engage in policy and advocacy. (The institute’s success led to the expansion of the program to include Hartford geriatric nurse fellows and physicians in the Beeson Scholars program.)

The institute starts with an insider’s view of current “Capitol Hill Affairs.” The next day is a whirlwind of sessions that includes an inspirational keynote speech, instruction on crafting an effective and succinct message for use with a policy-maker, funder, or member of the press, a mock hearing with role-playing, and advice on communicating with members of Congress and congressional staff. The second day covers how “How Congress Really Works,” and culminates with fellows and scholars visiting the offices of their senators and representatives. (Those designated as VA Scholars visit the Department of Veterans Affairs.) These meetings represent the beginning of the institute participants’ new relationship with the policy-making process. Ideally, the fellows and scholars will become valuable resources on aging and health issues for these policy makers, as the following alumni have demonstrated.

Karen I. Fredriksen-Goldsen’s research findings were considered in the policy deliberations regarding inclusion of sexual identity questions in the National Health Interview Survey, which were ultimately added in 2012. She also provided research findings and feedback for S. 3575, The LGBT Elder American Act of 2012, introduced by Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO), which would amend the Older Americans Act to address the needs of LGBT older adults.

After participating in the institute, Joe Pickard took his “Theory and Practice with Older Adults” class to Missouri’s capital to advocate on behalf of funding for respite services to caregivers of loved ones with Alzheimer’s Disease.

Victoria Rizzo said, “I have lobbied on Capitol Hill twice with others from New York during the Arthritis Foundation Advocacy event that occurs on Capitol Hill each year. I also participated in state level lobbying with AF activities to get funding to disseminate disease management programs throughout the state. Over several years, we received close to 2 million dollars.”

Michael Parker has “integrated material from your program into our graduate policy course & gerontology course; helped establish our Center for Mental Health & Aging; and helped start the VA Geriatric Scholars program.”

Jim Hinterlong reported, “I led a coalition of professional organizations and educational programs to achieve two legislative victories in Virginia. Forty years after its initial introduction, title protection for professional social workers finally was enacted in 2011. In 2013, we successfully moved the General Assembly to establish clear educational standards for clinical licensure… The Hartford PLI prepared me to engage effectively with lawmakers who were unfamiliar with social work and to create a stronger statewide alliance of stakeholders.”

Michelle Putnam said, “I created a doctoral course that helps students embed policy-relevant outcomes in their research designs.”

It has been a great privilege for me to help create and stage the PLI with Linda Harootyan and her staff at GSA, and Barbara Berkman, the national program director. You’ll be hearing a lot more from the scholars and fellows that now make public policy advocacy a bigger part of their lives. As the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Faculty Scholars Program winds down, the policy institute will be adapted and become a key part of Hartford’s new Change AGEnts Initiative, a grant-funded project that GSA will oversee. As you may have read in the October issue of Gerontology News, Change AGEnts is an endeavor that will utilize alumni from Hartford-funded programs to create change in the practice environment and improve the health of older adults, their families, and communities. And this month’s front page demonstrates how GSA and Harford are continuing to support the enhancement of social work training through the National Center on Gerontological Social Work Excellence.
Continued from page 1 - GSA Assembles Experts to Address Older Adults’ Sleep Health

increased risk of injury, obesity, falls, cardiovascular disease, and poorer cognitive performance.”

He also noted that older adults need just as much sleep as younger people, yet pain and other medical problems may contribute to making sleep more challenging.

“A growing number of practitioners now consider sleep quality a ‘vital sign’ like blood pressure that should be addressed as part of the general health exam. Surveys report that 44 percent of older adults have disturbed sleep a few nights each week, and that 15 to 18 percent of people reporting sleep disturbance use an OTC sleep aide,” Albert added.

The first major event related to this initiative was a late-October summit, where GSA convened thought leaders to evaluate current research regarding OTC sleep aid use and sleep health in older adults and provide a framework for improving awareness, advocacy, education, safety, and appropriate use of OTC sleep aid products. A white paper based on the summit’s proceedings will be released in November and copies will be available at the Annual Scientific Meeting in New Orleans.

Calling the summit a great success, Albert said the event may have been the first time first time that sleep and aging experts, community pharmacy organizations, and OTC industry professionals and regulators came together to discuss how older people use OTC sleep aids.

“Some key findings include the need to better define ‘sleep disturbance,’ as opposed to insomnia,” Albert said. “OTC sleep aids are meant for temporary, transient sleep disturbances, yet people use them chronically to treat insomnia. This can be a problem since the half-life of the active ingredient of OTC sleep aids — such as diphenhydramine — is long, with sedative effects persisting long into the morning after people wake up.”

Facts and resources related to GSA’s work regarding OTC product use and sleep health are available at www.geron.org/otc. This page contains white papers and handouts from the recent summits, a webinar, and current issue of the WHAT’S HOT newsletter. GSA additionally is disseminating information about these projects (as well as the National Adult Vaccination Program) during a press briefing that will be held at the Annual Scientific Meeting.
The ABC’s of Advocacy

Thanks are given to Ritwik Nath, MS, for his contributions to this installment of ESPO News.

The Oxford American-English Dictionary provides us with a useful definition of an advocate: “ad·vo·cate (noun): a person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy.” Have you taken on such a role before — within aging policy or other fields of interest — or would you like to? Hopefully, this article will advance your skills as an advocate whether you are a seasoned advocate or a novice in such efforts. We will share with you ideas for how to get involved in advocacy on the issues you care about.

A Policy Interest for Everyone

What aging policy issues speak to you? For every topic in gerontology, there is a policy issue to advocate for, it seems. For those interested in specialized populations, there are policies that promote the needs of women and minorities. Issues like working in old age and retirement are influenced by the larger policy system. Government support programs like Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security have long been a staple of public policy. Issues concerning independent elders include driving, housing, lifelong learning and civic engagement. Neurological and biological issues of aging such as the aging brain appear in debates amongst the public sphere. We see policies centered on long-term care, both formal and informal, all around us. The timely issue of health care reform and its impact on elders stand out as a very clear and current issue in which to assert your advocacy. And, of course, aging issues and their intersection with policy broaden expansively to the international realm.

Resources from GSA’s Policy Center

Finding the issues that resonate with you begins with accessing the right resources. As an ESPO member, probably the easiest and most direct way is to explore GSA’s online Policy Center (www.geron.org/policy-center), which provides a wealth of information on how to get involved in advocacy for the aging. By accessing this website, you will benefit from listings of pertinent policy publications and other related resources.

Publications on Aging Policy

Turning to publications by GSA and others will provide you with a good starting point in your quest for a vantage point to get involved. For example, GSA’s policy branch, the National Academy on an Aging Society, publishes the quarterly Public Policy & Aging Report (PP&AR), which you can subscribe to as a GSA member or as a non-member. PP&AR targets a broad population of potentially interested readers including, but not exclusive to, students, researchers, and decision-makers. The intent is to offer information, debate, and alternative solutions on pressing policy topics in an expedient manner.

In Gerontology News, you will find policy articles authored by Brian Lindberg, GSA’s policy advisor. The columns consist of such items as interviews with political officials, recent activities on Capitol Hill, forecasts on legislation, and advice for engaging in advocacy.

You can also sign up to receive free e-newsletters related to aging policy concerns. The Public Policy & Aging E-Newsletter (bimonthly) educates its readers on critical policy activities and opinions in the field of aging. The Civic Engagement E-Newsletter has a specific orientation to promoting civic engagement amongst older adults.

Additional Resources

GSA’s Policy Center website provides additional resources to help you prepare yourself for an advocacy role in aging. This interesting information includes:

Hot Topics in Aging: Organized by topic area with additional links, the resources in this section consist of articles from popular media and peer-reviewed journals, books and reports, congressional documents, and additional websites.

Aging Organizations: You can broaden your knowledge of and avenues for advocacy work with this list of close to 50 organizations committed to advocacy, research, policy, and government operations related to aging.

Data Sets and Demographics: Turn to these resources when you are seeking in-depth data on demographics and health-related trends amongst the elderly.

The Basic Toolkit

The GSA’s Policy Center’s Basic Toolkit will educate you about the legislative process and about key legislative vocabulary. Use the toolkit to familiarize yourself with the leaders in Congress, the types of congressional staff positions that exist, and the congressional committees relevant to your interests. You can also learn about ideas for writing letters to your legislators and for enhancing your meetings with congressional representatives and staff. The toolkit even provides a map of Capitol Hill’s buildings!

Once you have identified your policy interests and worked upon your advocacy skills, the next step involves carving out the time to take a stand and make a difference. Remember, as an emerging expert in aging issues, you offer a unique contribution to the policy arena. Consider it a professional and civic duty to engage in advocacy for those to whom you have committed your career.
NIA Seeks Applications on Palliative Care Research

The National Institute of Health (NIH) has issued a funding opportunity announcement that encourages research grant applications focused on palliative care in geriatric populations. This announcement emphasizes studies in a variety of settings including ambulatory care, hospitals (and specific sites within hospitals including specialty wards, intensive care units and emergency departments), assisted living facilities, and short- and long-term care facilities; however, hospice and end-of-life settings are not included, as they are the subject of other NIH programs. Rather, the NIH is seeking research on palliative care in settings and at time points earlier in geriatric patients’ disease or disability trajectories. Types of studies may include observational, quasi-experimental, or interventional studies using primary data collection and/or secondary analyses. Leveraging on-going cohorts, intervention studies, networks, data and specimen repositories, and other existing resources and infrastructure are encouraged. The due date for applications is January 5, 2014. Additional details may be found at grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-354.html.

Grants to Support Research on Aging, Eye Disease

The National Eye Institute and the National Institute on Aging are encouraging the submission of new, innovative projects to understand how the biology of aging contributes to disease; to evaluate how the failure of homeostatic processes causes or allows the transition from aging to early disease; to define the biological staging of disease to understand pathophysiology; identify biomarkers, and explore therapy; and to distinguish normal ocular changes associated with aging from pathophysiologic changes. The due date for initial applications is January 5, 2014. Review the full announcement at grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-332.html.

Federal Agencies Target Medications for Substance-Use Disorders

The National Institute on Aging and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) are offering funds to accelerate the development of medication for the treatment of substance-use disorders by encouraging research applications to support a diverse array of preclinical and/or clinical research projects. The goal is to fund medication studies that will have high impact and quickly yield the necessary results to advance medications closer to FDA approval. It is expected that these grants will be short-term (funded for up to 3 years) and large (up to $5 million per year) cooperative agreements with close monitoring and significant scientific involvement of NIDA staff. The earliest submission date is February 27, 2014. Refer to grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-13-270.html for more information.

Continued from page 1 - New Centers to Focus on Enhanced Geriatric Social Work Training

Each center is expected to provide leadership for social work educators; build bridges to local health professionals, such as those employed by Area Agencies on Aging; form regional consortia of social work field agencies serving older adults and their families, designed to address gaps in education and training on aging among these local agencies; engage in inter-professional collaborations with other departments of the university, with other professional groups within the region, and with Hartford Centers of Excellence in medicine and nursing; provide mentoring to Hartford-funded researchers based at the U.S. Veterans Administration; create and evaluate training models that translate new knowledge into practice and policy; and seek additional support to sustain the Social Work Centers.

The grant that established the National Center was designed to build upon the successes of the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Initiative (HGSWI), which has been coordinated by GSA since 1999 and has supported over 200 doctoral fellows and faculty scholars who are helping to build a workforce of social workers trained and educated in geriatrics.

In addition to founding the five Hartford Academic Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Social Work, the National Center will collaborate with the VA to develop social work research leaders to help advance evidence-based knowledge related to VA practice in aging; mobilize the current HGSWI Alumni Network by using their expertise to impact practice and policy; and seek funding from a variety of sources to support and expand its objectives and functions, as well as ensure its sustainability.
GSA Receives Funds to Put AGHE Directory Online
In September, the Board of Directors of the Archstone Foundation awarded a grant to GSA to create an online version of AGHE’s Directory of Educational Programs in Gerontology and Geriatrics. This resource is expected to go live in mid-2014. The Archstone Foundation is a private grantmaking organization whose mission is to contribute toward the preparation of society in meeting the needs of an aging population. It has awarded more than $86 million in grants since it was established in 1985.

Miami’s Scripps Center Receives $1 Million
The Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University has received a $1 million commitment from Marilyn (nee Scripps) and Martin Wade of Cincinnati. Marilyn is the great-granddaughter of E.W. Scripps, who in 1922 endowed the Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems at Miami, and in 1972, the Scripps Foundation became what is now the Scripps Gerontology Center. Today, the center’s mission is to do work that makes a positive difference in the lives of aging individuals, their families and communities, while also meeting the needs of aging societies. Designated as an Ohio Center for Excellence in the category of Cultural and Societal Transformation, the Scripps Gerontology Center also helps educate tomorrow’s global leaders in aging by providing hands-on research training to graduate students and thousands of hours of undergraduate service-learning opportunities. Miami University offers aging-related degrees at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels.

Wayne State University Launches Social Work/Gerontology Doctorate
The Wayne State University School of Social Work has created the nation’s first dual-title PhD program in social work and gerontology to address social work practitioners’ needs as they help the country’s surging senior population navigate complex urban environments and enjoy unprecedented access to health services under the Affordable Care Act. Beginning with the fall 2013 semester, PhD students may select the dual-title option after general acceptance into the social work doctoral program. In addition to standard doctoral-level courses in research methods, statistics and social work theory, gerontology dual-title PhD students will complete nine credits of gerontology-focused courses, participate in a gerontology-focused research practicum, and write both a substantive paper and a doctoral dissertation with mentorship from gerontology faculty. The total number of required degree credits is the same for both dual-title PhD students and students receiving a PhD in social work alone.

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Center on Aging Research, Intergenerational Teaching and Service (CARITAS)

In response to the unprecedented increase in our nation’s older adult population and their social and health services needs, Temple University School of Social Work is committed to developing a Center on Aging Research, Intergenerational Teaching and Service (CARITAS). The Founding Director will provide a vision for the Center and will develop a strategic plan for building a University-wide Center on Aging. The Founding Director will build on the existing institutional assets in research and service related to elder protective services and intergenerational learning to identify opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborative research. In addition, the Founding Director will work with faculty to develop a practice-based specialization in aging in our MSW program. One of 8 academic disciplines in the College of Health Professions and Social Work, our School of Social Work enrolls more than 1,000 BSW and MSW students who attend class in Philadelphia, Harrisburg (the state capital) and in our satellite Commonwealth Cohorts across the state of Pennsylvania.

We are looking for a nationally recognized visionary leader who has demonstrated a strong program of research and scholarship related to aging. A PhD or equivalent degree in Social Work, Public Health, Public Policy or a related discipline is required. Applicants should be eligible for tenure at the rank of professor or associate professor. We invite applications as well as nominations.

For requirements and a position description, please visit http://chpsw.temple.edu/ssac/social-work-faculty-position-aging

To apply, submit your curricula vitae, a letter of interest that addresses your qualifications, management and leadership philosophy, and a list of references in Word format to: swsearch@temple.edu.

Temple University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer dedicated to excellence through diversity.

To nominate potential applicants, please email swsearch@temple.edu. All applications and nominations will be held in the strictest of confidence.
Abuse Claims on the Rise in England

Recent high-profile abuse reports involving care homes in England have triggered an increase in alerts to social services departments regarding alleged neglect, financial exploitation, or abuse, according to an article published in The Telegraph on October 5. Social workers have called the rise in numbers the “Winterbourne effect” because of the scandal over the treatment of residents at the Winterbourne View hospital in Bristol. According to official National Health Service (NHS) data obtained by Age UK, the number of cases of alleged mistreatment or neglect of older and disabled people in England rose by a quarter from January to April of this year. Older people accounted for six out of 10 cases last year. The figures indicate that more than a third of cases examined have found no further action was taken and approximately one in 20 cases had the outcome recorded as “unknown.” Age UK is reported as saying that regardless of the reason for the increase in reports, the high level of cases in which no further action is taken was “worrying.” Figures collected by the Health and Social Care Information Centre, also show that possible neglect was the biggest cause for concern, accounting more than a third of cases, which is more than the quarter of alerts due to alleged physical abuse. Financial abuse was the cause for one in five cases, which is often said to be an overlooked issue. Overall 36 per cent of cases resulted in “no further action” decisions. It is also reported that the rise in the reported alerts may suggest that individuals are more confident in making the report.

Hong Kong Struggles with Senior Housing

A CNBC special report that was published on October 7 states that there is an inadequate amount of housing in Hong Kong for the older adult population. A non-profit organization, the Hong Kong Housing Society, offers rental flats for lower-income individuals at a decreased rate, but space is limited. It is reported that property prices are rising, which is leading the challenge for Hong Kong’s older population to find affordable housing. Approximately 13 percent of Hong Kong’s population is 65 years of age and older, and by 2030 it is expected to grow to 25 percent, exacerbating the housing crisis for this segment of the population. According to the country’s Elderly Commission, which is a government advisory group, over 50 percent of older adults are currently living in subsidized housing. The housing crisis also includes those in the middle income group. To address the housing issues for this middle income group, the Hong Kong Housing Society offers life-leases for older tenants who meet certain criteria, provide upfront payment, and then are assured life-time occupancy of the flat.