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News from TRIPLL

January 2012

News

Development of a New Fall Risk Assessment and Screening Tool

A recent study published in *Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy* looked to address the increased incidence of unintentional falls amongst older adults. Because physical therapists, physicians, and other health care professionals usually encounter at risk patients after a fall, the authors of the study looked to create an effective tool that would help health care professionals identify at risk individuals prior to a fall related injury. The authors developed the Fall Risk Assessment and Screening Tool (FRAST) specifically for use in primary care settings to help identify at risk older adults. The authors hypothesized that, "early identification of heightened fall risk in community-dwelling older adults, when combined with proactive falls prevention interventions should lead to a decrease in fall risk, fall rate, and injury or death resulting from falls." Prior research has shown that individuals age 65 and older reported the highest incidence of falls and would benefit the most from a falls prevention intervention program; " Americans aged 65 to 85 years and older, reported 3,284,671 unintentional injuries, of which, 64.4 % were falls." The study found FRAST to be an effective tool when used in primary care settings to identify fall risk amongst the aforementioned age group and concluded that FRAST could be used successfully to limit and prevent future falls.

A link to the research article is provided below:
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22124417>

Muscle Strength and the Health-Related Quality of Life in Non-Elite Older Adults

A recent study published in *Age and Aging* addressed the loss of muscle strength amongst older adults and its effect on health-related quality of life. Research studies have shown that diminished muscle strength increases the risk of hospitalization, disability, morbidity, falls and significant health-care cost amongst the elderly. This research study looked to clarify the mechanism by which diminished

muscle strength increased morbidity risk amongst older adult populations. However, the relationship between diminished muscle strength and decreased health-related quality of life was not determined. The authors mention that other factors may play a role in increased morbidity risk among older adults as a result of diminished muscle strength, "we should remember cause and effect have not been demonstrated and it may be reduced quality of life in older age could lead to inactivity and loss of muscle strength." The research article presented data suggesting increased functional activity amongst older adults improved health-related quality of life. The authors found that active older adults reported a higher quality of life in comparison to non-active older adults, "older adults who had a lot of energy and less bodily pain are likely to undertake more in life in terms of fulfilling their societal roles and this might have resulted in their improved physical, social, emotional function."

A link to the research article is provided below:
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22126987>

The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Group Interventions on Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis
A study published in *Annals of Rheumatic Diseases* evaluated the Vitality Training Program's (VTP) effect on patients diagnosed with rheumatic joint diseases. The Vitality Training Program is a 10-session mindfulness-based group intervention that focused on the thoughts, emotions, and bodily experiences of participants. The program incorporates creative exercises such as guided imagery, music, drawing, and poetry as methods for relieving stress and improving quality of life. The study consisted of a randomized controlled trial designed to determine the effectiveness of VTP in improving rheumatic conditions in comparison to routine medical care. The authors looked to evaluate methods for older adults to cope with fatigue as the result of inflammatory diseases, and found that VTP was an effective treatment method. The study also found that VTP was capable of improving psychological distress, and self-efficacy amongst participants, "As hypothesized, the VTP group significantly increased their emotional processing (i.e., acknowledging and understanding emotions) compared with the control group." The authors determined VTP to be an effective treatment tool for improving the quality of life of individuals suffering from rheumatic conditions, but felt the program would be more useful and effective in conjunction with existing treatments, "the VTP may be considered as a beneficial complement to existing treatments in subjects with RA, particularly for those who experience heightened psychological distress and fatigue."

A link to the research article is provided below:
<http://ard.bmj.com/content/early/2011/11/24/annrheumdis-2011-200351.short?rss=1>

TRIPLL Affiliate Mark Lachs Discusses Elder Abuse in the Philadelphia Inquirer

Dr. Mark Lachs addresses growing reports of elder abuse, and the rise of financial scams targeting older adults in a recent publication of *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In the article, Dr. Lachs mentions that elder abuse often goes undetected in hospitals, "More than a third of the elderly emergency room patients who had also reported abuse, he found, were likely there for injuries or other consequences of abuse, such as depression. Yet attending physicians treated only the physical symptoms." This coupled with the fact that only a small fraction of fraud cases committed against older adults ever come to the attention of authorities, suggest that older adult populations are more vulnerable to continuous mental, physical, and financial abuse. Dr. Lachs states "I have no doubt that financial fraud is by far the most common form of financial abuse of the elderly", and recent research studies indicate increased reports of financial fraud cases amongst older adults. A 2008 study conducted by researchers from the University of Chicago found that a large portion of 3,000 interviewed older adults reported a "caregiver, relative, or financial adviser had improperly taken their money." The article also discussed Dr. Lachs previous research studies on elder abuse, and addressed future research possibilities within the geriatrics field.

A link to the article is provided below:

<http://www.philly.com/philly/business/136119793.html>

Daily Pain Management Techniques used by Older Adults

In a recent study published in *Journal of Aging Health* researchers looked to identify the daily self management practices of older adults with arthritis. The authors wanted to determine whether a relationship existed between symptom experience and self-management behavior. The study found that study participants listed various methods for managing their arthritis pain that included foods and beverages, complementary therapies, over-the-counter and prescription medications, and home remedies. Over 72 % of participants reported cutting back on activities in response to joint pain conditions with 78 % of participants staying in bed as a result of severe joint pain. Study participants were more likely to use their self-care techniques when they were experiencing increased discomfort as a result of their arthritis condition, "odds of implementing these self-care practices were greater on days with joint pain, swelling, and stiffness." Older adults seemed to manage their arthritis on a day to day basis, only self-managing the condition during bouts of moderate to severe pain. The study also found that older adults with arthritis were more likely to use complementary therapies to manage their pain than those without arthritis, but found that increased complimentary therapy use (amongst this population) was not specifically arthritis related.

A link to the research article is provided below:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22173224>

Upcoming Events

The following list includes upcoming seminars, meetings, and conferences that focus on aging, pain, or general research methods

January Work-in-Progress Seminar

January 18, 2011

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

To attend please contact Marcus Warmington at maw2054@med.cornell.edu or (212) 746-1801.

Fall 2011 Community Education Programs

Hospital for Special Surgery offers a wide range of educational lectures and workshops for the community. Lectures range from managing osteoarthritis pain and falls prevention, to movement classes including dance and Tai Chi. See our Event Calendar for course descriptions and to register online. To request copies of brochures please email pped@hss.edu.

The 38th AGHE Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference

The AGHE Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference is the premier national forum for discussing ideas and issues in gerontological and geriatric education. Educators, clinicians, administrators, researchers, and students share their experiences, expertise, and innovations regarding teaching and learning about aging and older persons. Plan now to be part of this opportunity for professional growth and development.

February 23-26, 2012

Engaging Aging in Higher Education

Renaissance Arlington Capitol View Hotel

Arlington, Virginia

Register online via:

<http://www.aghe.org/register>

2012 Aging in America Conference

The ASA Conference, with more than 3,000 attendees, is recognized as a showcase for programs and projects that can be replicated, a forum for policy discussion and advocacy, and a prime source of information on new research findings in aging. It is the largest gathering of a diverse, multidisciplinary community of professionals from the fields of aging, healthcare and education, along with business leaders from across the United States.

March 28- April 1, 2012

Washington, D.C.

Register online via:

<http://asaging.org/node/1810>

Council of Senior Centers & Services of NYC, Inc. (CSCS) will host its 23rd Annual Conference on Aging and Vendor Expo on January 19, 2012.

What: Annual Conference on Aging, "The Power of Aging: Creating a Future for Older New Yorkers"

When: January 19, 2012, 8:30 - 4:30

Where: CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue

Keynote Speaker: Larry Minnix, President & CEO, Leading Age

For more information: <http://cscs-ny.org/events/conference/2012-pre-conference-material.php>

Funding Opportunities

Pain Related Funding

Mechanisms Mediating Osteoarthritis in Aging (R01)
Program Announcement (PA) Number: PA-12-019

This Funding Opportunity Announcement issued by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) invites applications on research employing genetically defined and modified mouse models, other animal models such as dogs and monkeys, or archived human joint tissues to explore the biological mechanisms underlying osteoarthritis. Osteoarthritis is a significant problem in the elderly population, and a major contributor to mobility limitations that are endemic in this population and, therefore, is an important element in the research missions of NIA and NIAMS. Inflammatory processes are evident in advanced stages of osteoarthritis, and are likely to be major contributors to the chronic pain that is the most common symptom of the condition. However, for the purpose of this announcement, osteoarthritis is distinguished from other joint diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, in which inflammation arising from autoimmunity is the primary cause of tissue damage. The root causes of joint degeneration in osteoarthritis remain unclear.

Application due date (deadline)

January 25th, 2012 (5:00pm local time of applicant organization)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-019.html>

Pilot and Feasibility Clinical Research Grants in
Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (R21)
Program Announcement (PA) Number: PAR-10-282

This FOA, issued by National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) of the National Institutes of Health, encourages exploratory/developmental clinical

research related to the prevention or treatment of arthritis and musculoskeletal and skin diseases, conditions, and/or injuries. The Pilot and Feasibility Clinical Research Grants Program is designed to allow initiation of exploratory, short-term clinical studies, so that new ideas may be investigated without stringent requirements for preliminary data. The short-term studies should focus on research questions that are likely to gather critical preliminary data in support of a future, planned clinical trial. They can include testing new or prevention strategies, a new intervention, or unique combinations of therapies. A high priority is the use of such studies to help stimulate the translation of promising research developments from the laboratory into clinical practice.

Applications are continuous and no specified due date is applied.
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-09-195.html>

Mechanistic Studies of Pain and Alcohol Dependence (R01)

Program Announcement (PA) Number: PA-11-267

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) encourages applications that propose to conduct mechanistic studies on the relationship between alcohol drinking, alcohol dependence and pain. An association between chronic pain conditions and alcohol dependence has been revealed in numerous studies with episodes of alcohol abuse antedating chronic pain in some people and alcohol dependence emerging after the onset of chronic pain in others. Pain transmission and alcohol's reinforcing effects share overlapping neural substrates giving rise to the possibility that chronic pain states significantly affect alcohol use patterns and promote the development of dependence and addiction. In addition, long term alcohol intoxication and alcohol dependence induce pain symptoms and may exacerbate chronic pain arising from other sources. The objective of this FOA is to understand genetic, pharmacological and learning mechanisms underlying the association between the propensity to drink alcohol and pain responses.

Applications are continuous and no specified due date is applied.
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-267.html>

Mayday Fund of New York

The Mayday Fund is dedicated to alleviating the incidence, degree, and consequence of human physical pain.

The Mayday Fund's current grant-making targets are projects that result in clinical interventions to reduce the toll of physical pain, pediatric pain, pain in non-verbal populations, and pain in the context of emergency medicine. Mayday will also continue to be proactive in its commitment to promote networking between veterinary and human medicine, especially in an effort to inform measurements of pain in non-verbal populations. Finally, the

trustees of the Mayday Fund wish to be nimble enough to respond as special opportunities present themselves. Grants are made only to public charities and educational institutions officially recognized as such by the IRS. The Mayday Fund concentrates its activities in the United States. On occasion, grants have been made to Canadian organizations when the project has an effect that reaches beyond Canada. Grants cannot be made to individuals.

Applications are continuous and no specified due date is applied.

Age Related Funding

Social Neuroscience and Neuroeconomics of Aging (R21)

Funding opportunity announcement (PAR) number: PAR-11-336

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) issues this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) with special review to stimulate interdisciplinary aging-relevant research in the social, affective and economic neurosciences. The NIA invites applications examining social, emotional and economic behaviors of relevance to aging, using approaches that examine mechanisms and processes at both (a) the social, behavioral or psychological (emotional, cognitive, motivational) level, and (b) the neurobiological or genetic level. Proposals are encouraged that have an overriding emphasis on economic, social or emotional processes and associated genetic or neurobiological processes. Applications should demonstrate either relevance for aging or for age differences or age-related changes in these processes. Aging-relevant applications can address issues of importance to the well-being and health of either mid-life or older adults, and can include data spanning the entire life course.

The earliest submission date for this grant is January 16, 2012

Application due date (deadline)

February 16th, 2012 (5:00pm local time of applicant organization)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-11-336.html>

Aging Research Dissertation Awards to Increase Diversity.

Funding opportunity announcement (PAR) number: PAR-11-291

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) announces the reissuance of Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) that provides dissertation awards in all areas of research within NIA's strategic priorities to increase diversity of the scientific research workforce engaged in research on aging and aging-related health conditions. As part of NIA's Health Disparities Strategic Plan, this Funding Opportunity Announcement announces the availability of dissertation awards (R36) to support individuals whose advancement in research will help ensure that a diverse pool of highly trained scientists is available in appropriate scientific disciplines to address NIA's mission. That mission includes research on the basic biology of

aging, on chronic, disabling, and degenerative diseases of aging, with a particular focus on Alzheimer's disease, on multiple morbidities, on individual behavioral and social changes with aging, on caregiving, on longevity, and on the consequences for society of an aging population.

Application due date (deadline)

January 5th, 2012 (5:00pm local time of applicant organization)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm>

Translational Research to Help Older Adults Maintain their Health and Independence in the Community.

Program announcement (PA) number: PA-11-123

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the Administration on Aging (AoA) invite applications using the R01 award mechanism for translational research that moves evidence-based research findings towards the development of new interventions, programs, policies, practices, and tools that can be used by community-based organizations to help elderly individuals remain healthy and independent, and living in their own homes and communities. The goal of this FOA is to support translational research involving collaborations between academic research centers and community-based organizations with expertise serving the elderly (such as city and state health departments, city/town leadership councils, and Area Agencies on Aging) that will enhance our understanding of practical tools, techniques, programs and policies that communities across the nation can use to more effectively respond to needs of their aging populations.

Application due date (deadline)

January 25th, 2012 (5:00pm local time of applicant organization)

<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/GetGrantFromFedgrants?opportunity=PA-11-123>

Behavioral and Social Genomics of Aging:

Opportunities in the Health and Retirement Study (R01)

Program announcement (PA) number: PA-11-318

The Health and Retirement Study (HRS; see at

<http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/>) is a longitudinal, nationally representative sample of the US population aged 50 years and older (plus spouses) with an oversample of African and Hispanic Americans and a total sample size of over 20,000. Using funds from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, the HRS is currently conducting genome-wide scans of DNA samples from approximately 20,000 participants, using the Illumina HumanOmni 2.5 Quad chip. It is anticipated that the genotype data for the first 13,000 subjects will be released to the public via dbGaP in the Fall of 2011, with data from the remaining participants to be released by the end of 2012. This FOA encourages applications taking advantage of the newly available genetic data to advance our understanding of how genetic,

behavioral, and psychosocial factors affect the health and well-being of older Americans.

Application due date (deadline)

January 25th, 2012 (5:00pm local time of applicant organization)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-318.html>

National Science Foundation funding grant "General & Age-Related Disabilities Engineering (GARDE)"

The General & Age Related Disabilities Engineering (GARDE)

program supports research that will lead to the development of new technologies, devices, or software for persons with disabilities.

Research may be supported that is directed to the characterization, restoration, and/or substitution of human functional ability or cognition, or to the interaction of persons with disabilities and their environment. Areas of particular recent interest are disability-related research in neuroscience/neuroengineering and rehabilitation robotics. Emphasis is placed on significant advancement of fundamental engineering and scientific knowledge and not on incremental improvements. Proposals should advance discovery or innovation beyond the frontiers of current knowledge in disability-related research. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Director Ted Conway at tconway@nsf.gov, or call (703) 292-7091, prior to submitting a proposal.

More information on the grant can be found at the following link

http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=501021

The New Investigator Awards in Alzheimer's Disease Funded by The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation and The Diane and Guilford Glazer Foundation, the major goal of this partnership program is to support important research in areas in which more scientific investigation is needed to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of Alzheimer's disease. The program will also serve to encourage junior investigators in the United States and Israel to pursue research and academic careers in the neurosciences, and Alzheimer's disease in particular. Projects in basic and translational research related to Alzheimer's disease (AD) that are clinically relevant, will be considered. Projects that focus on healthy brain aging are also considered. For one of the awards, priority may be given to an investigator with a research interest related to healthy brain aging. Areas of research could for example include learning and memory, nutrition, exercise, cardiovascular risk factors, as they relate to the brain and the aging process. The applicant must be an independent investigator with assigned independent space as assigned by the departmental chair or equivalent official, and must be within the first ten years of receiving a doctoral degree by July 1, 2011. Exceptions to the ten year rule may be requested for unusual circumstances by emailing an NIH-style bio-sketch to AFAR at grants@afar.org. The proposed research must be conducted at any type of not-for-profit setting in

the United States or Israel.

<http://www.afar.org/research/funding/new-investigator-awards>



The Translational Research Institute on Pain in Later Life (TRIPLL) is an NIA funded Edward R. Roybal center with a focus on persistent pain due to both cancer and non-cancer related causes. TRIPLL is a collaboration between investigators at Weill Cornell Medical College, Cornell-Ithaca, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, Hospital for Special Surgery, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Visiting Nurse Service of New York and Council of Senior Centers & Service of NYC, Inc.

For more information on TRIPLL please contact Marcus Warmington at maw2054@med.cornell.edu.



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