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News from TRIPLL

February 2012

News

Adverse Drug Events in Older Americans

A recent study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* addressed increased reports of adverse-drug event related hospitalizations among older adults. The authors sought to "estimate the frequency and rates of hospitalization after emergency department visits for adverse drug events in older adults and to assess the contribution of specific medications." The authors identified 5077 cases involving adults age 65 and older that were hospitalized from 2007-2009 due to adverse-drug events. Opioid analgesic medications were commonly implicated in emergency hospitalizations for adverse-drug events among older adults. The majority of hospitalizations involved older adults above the age of 80, and approximately 2/3 of the listed hospitalizations were the direct result of unintentional overdose. A large portion of emergency hospitalizations resulted from commonly used medications (particularly antithrombotic and antidiabetic drugs). The authors concluded that improved management of these drugs would decrease adverse-drug event related hospitalizations, and increased regulation of opioid analgesic use would decrease adverse drug event related hospitalizations among older adults.

A link to the research article is provided below:

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMsa1103053>

Bi-Directional Association Between Pain and Depression

A recent study published in *Arthritis Care and Research* examined pain's effect on depression symptoms. The authors hypothesized that the relationship between pain and depression may be bi-directional (both components affecting each other). They also tested two other hypotheses, the consequence hypothesis and the antecedent hypothesis. According to the consequence hypothesis, "pain develops first, interferes with sleep, work and social activities, and ultimately leads to an increased risk of depression." In contrast, "the antecedent hypothesis states that depression

develops first, increases pain sensitivity and lowers pain tolerance threshold and ultimately increases risk of chronic pain." The study followed 394 patients over a mean period of 7.5 years who received annual assessments using the Health Assessment Questionnaire tool (HAQ). Researchers found that, "Individuals with comorbid pain and depression experience higher morbidity and mortality relative to either condition alone." This suggests the two conditions required more research regarding their combined affect on individuals. The researchers found evidence of bi-directional associations between pain and depressive symptomatology during the study, and determined that treatment decisions may effect bi-directional relationships between pain and depressive symptomatology. The authors state, "observed changes in pain and depressive symptomatology were found to be strongly driven by previous values of pain and depressive symptomatology, reflecting perhaps the impact of treatment decisions."

A link to the article is provided below:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/acr.21602/pdf>

New Anti-CCP Test for Rheumatoid Arthritis Diagnosis

In a new study published in the *Journal of Clinical Immunology* researchers developed a more effective method for diagnosing and identifying rheumatoid arthritis using cyclic citrullated peptide (CCP); "The presence of antibodies to cyclic citrullinated peptide (CCP) is better at discriminating RA patients and is also associated with significantly more disease activity." Initial RA diagnostic procedures tested for rheumatoid factor, which is not as prevalent among individuals diagnosed with RA as CCP is. By testing for anti-CCP, researchers were able to convincingly identify RA among the study-cohort. Also, individuals who tested weakly to moderately positive for anti-ccp antibodies were often diagnosed with other autoimmune disorders, suggesting that anti-CC tests can be effective in diagnosing numerous autoimmune conditions.

A link to the article is provided below:

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/p876374u100686q3/fulltext.pdf>

The Effects of Exergaming among Older Adults

In the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* a recently published study addressed the use of exergaming technology in treating and preventing dementia symptoms among older adults. The study tested whether "stationary cycling with virtual reality tours (cybercycle) would enhance executive function and clinical status more than traditional exercise; exercise effort would explain improvement; and brain-derived neurotrophic growth factor (BDNF) would increase." The study was 3 month randomized clinical trial, with a 2 year follow up, consisting of 102 older adults from 8 separate retirement communities. The authors found a 23% risk reduction in clinical progression to mild cognitive impairment (MCI) among participants involved in the cybercycling portion of the study. As stated by the authors, "cybercycling older adults achieved better cognitive function than traditional exercisers...suggesting that simultaneous cognitive and physical exercise has greater potential for preventing cognitive decline."

A link to the article is provided below:

http://www.ajpmonline.org/webfiles/images/journals/amepre/AMEPRE_3299-embargoed-stamped.pdf

8 Week Yoga Intervention is Shown to Improve Fibromyalgia Symptoms

A study published in the *Journal of Pain Research* evaluated the effectiveness of an 8 week yoga intervention in relieving fibromyalgia symptoms in women. The study consisted of 22 women who participated in a 75 minute yoga class that met twice a week. Questionnaires concerning pain symptoms were administered throughout the intervention, and salivary cortisol samples were collected from participants during each class. Cortisol samples were collected because alterations in cortisol levels are more prevalent among individuals with fibromyalgia. As stated in the article "alterations in levels of cortisol, corticotrophin-releasing hormone, growth hormone and thyroid hormones, may have secondary effects on pain." The study results indicate the yoga intervention effectively reduced fibromyalgia symptoms and increased mindfulness among participants; "the results demonstrated post-intervention improvement on a variety of pain and psychological variables."

A link to the article is provided below:

<http://www.dovepress.com/an-eight-week-yoga-intervention-is-associated-with-improvements-in-pai-peer-reviewed-article-JPR>

TRIPLL Affiliate Dr. Karl Pillemer Featured in NY Times Article

Dr. Karl Pillemer's book "30 Lessons for Living" was prominently featured in a recent *New York Times* article. The book offers practical advice collected from more than 1,000 older adults from various socio-economic, educational, and occupational backgrounds. The *New York Times* article presents a brief summary of insights from the book on topics such as marriage, careers, parenting, aging, regrets, and happiness. The article mentioned that one of the major regrets among older adults was the lack of travel during their youth. In the article, Dr. Pillemer is quoted as saying, "traveling is so rewarding that it should take precedence over other things younger people spend money on."

A link to the article is provided below:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/10/health/elderly-experts-share-life-advice-in-cornell-project.html?pagewanted=1&ref=health>

Upcoming Events

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

February Work-in-Progress Seminar

February 15, 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>

TRAINING-I'm Still Here: Montessori-Based Activities for Persons With Dementia

Hearthstone Alzheimer Care's Michael Skrajner will teach participants to use the I'm Still Here Montessori-Based Activity Program (MAP), an innovative, research-supported method that improves the lives of people with dementia.

March 5-March 7, 2012
New York, NY
Register online via:
[http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?
llr=65m45zbab&oeidk=a07e5f7vuh63e3bec19](http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=65m45zbab&oeidk=a07e5f7vuh63e3bec19)

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>

Funding Opportunities

Pain Related Funding

NEW INVESTIGATOR GRANT FOR ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

"New Investigator Grants are intended to provide the support for young Arthritis Health Professionals such as physical therapists as they initiate

independent research related to arthritis. These grants typically cover the cost of salaries, consumable supplies, equipment, travel and other items to conduct the proposed research. Applicants must be establishing their first independent, self-directed laboratory for whom the institution provides space and other resources. The New Investigator Grant provides funding for a period of up to two years and is not for wet bench laboratory research. Suitable studies include, but are not limited to, functional, behavioral, nutritional, occupational, or epidemiological aspects of patient care and management. The award amount is \$50,000 per year.

Eligibility Criteria

New Investigator Grants are designed for individuals with a doctoral degree and demonstrated research experience related to arthritis and/or the care of patients with arthritis or education relevant to arthritis. These awards are limited to applicants who have received a doctoral degree within the last five years prior to the submission date. MDs and individuals at the NIH and CDC are not eligible. A candidate must have membership or eligibility for membership in his/her professional organization.

Citizenship/Work Abroad

Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident at the time of application. Awards may not be transferred outside of the U.S."

Application due date

February 6th, 2012 (5:00pm eastern time)

<https://proposalcentral.altum.com/>

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."

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>

Neuronal Hyper Excitability and Seizures in Alzheimer's Disease (NHESAD)

"Competition Objectives: The Alzheimer's Association is launching a new initiative to stimulate the development of new pharmacological strategies to prevent or treat seizures and abnormal neural network activity in Alzheimer's disease (AD). The Association's Request for Applications (RFAs) is aimed at the identification, screening and development of therapeutic strategies to reduce seizures and other types of abnormal neural network activity and at the evaluation of drug safety and efficacy at the preclinical and clinical levels. The RFA is designed to enable preliminary pilot research or proof-of-principle studies that can provide data for further research support by other funding agencies."

Application due date (deadline)

February 7th, 2012

http://www.alz.org/research/downloads/2012_NHESAD.pdf

Development of New Cognitive and Functional Instruments (DNCFI).

"Competition Objectives: The Alzheimer's Association is launching a new initiative to stimulate the scholarly investigation and development of cognitive or functional evaluation instruments that can capture the earliest changes in the disease, are sensitive to change over time, and/or could be used in clinical trials. This RFA is designed to enable pilot research or proof-of-principle studies that can provide preliminary data for subsequent inquiry. Background: It is now well recognized that the key underlying brain changes that lead to Alzheimer's disease are present many years before the clinical diagnosis. Further, the cognitive and functional changes develop gradually over time, well before a clinical diagnosis of dementia is warranted. The intense focus on the earliest preclinical stages of AD calls for a concomitant focus on developing cognitive or functional instruments that are suitable for measuring these changes."

Application due date (deadline)

February 7th, 2012

http://www.alz.org/research/downloads/2012_DNCFI.pdf

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>

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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

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