DISRUPTIONS TO CARE AND THE USE OF TELEHEALTH AMONG OLDER ADULTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
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Reports emerged early in the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic that older adults were foregoing non-COVID19-related care, due to fears of contracting the virus during appointments and because of healthcare providers’ reduced operations. Beginning in July, 2020, we explored the impact of the pandemic on disruptions to care and older adults’ use of telehealth. Preliminary results from 53 older adults aged 66 to 93 (mean: 72.6) found that many older adults experienced disruptions in their care, ranging from 30-50% depending on the type of care. The most commonly disrupted care types were mental health and rehabilitation care (occupational, physical, or speech therapy), with 50% of older adults reporting disruptions to mental health and 50% to rehabilitation care. The most common reason for the disruptions was closed care providers’ offices. Similar results were found for primary care (46% reporting disruptions), dental care (44%), and vision care (30%), with between 62-71% citing closed offices as a reason for the disruption. The use of telehealth among the sample was high (44%), and the majority (83%) of these older adults reported never having used it previously. All who used it reported being very or somewhat comfortable with the technology, and 83% said they would use it again even if in-person care was available. These findings suggest the pandemic has had a significant impact on older adults’ care and that the expansion of telehealth could be increase access to care during and after the pandemic.

DUAL CAREGIVERS OF RELATIVES WITH DEMENTIA IN RURAL VIRGINIA: THE ADDED STRESS OF COVID-19
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Family caregivers often find themselves “sandwiched” between caring for an older relative with dementia (PwD) and another person. Serving in a dual caregiving role presents unique challenges and has consequences for caregivers’ physical and mental health. Seven daily diary interviews with 46 dual dementia caregivers assessed their daily stressors and informal and formal supports. Results showed that dementia caregivers who also cared for another older relative reported poorer physical health and used more community-based services to care for the PwD. Conversely, dementia caregivers who also cared for younger relatives reported greater secondary stressors, lower family support, and use of fewer community-based services to care for the PwD. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, two telephone interviews were conducted with 15 dual dementia caregivers. Caregivers were asked in-depth questions about how the pandemic had impacted their caregiving responsibilities, mental health, and use of community-based services. Guided by stress process and behavior models, a thematic analysis of dual caregivers’ interviews revealed that caregivers had less time for themselves, engaged in self-care activities less often, and felt their social life had suffered. Many of the caregivers reported feeling exhausted, stressed, and had more things to do than they could handle. Of the eight caregivers that used services before COVID-19, six experienced a change in services including loss of services, different workers, or self-selected cancellation of services. Discussion focuses on challenges dual dementia caregivers face and the added stressors they experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSE OLDER ADULTS LIVING ALONE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT
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Background and Objectives: Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, older adults with cognitive impairment living alone (an estimated 4.3 million individuals in the United States) were at high risk for negative health outcomes. There is an urgent need to learn how this population is managing during the pandemic. Research Design and Methods: This is a qualitative study of 24 adults aged 55 and over living alone with cognitive impairment from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Participants’ lived experiences during the pandemic were elicited via 59 ethnographic interviews conducted over the phone either in English, Spanish, or Cantonese. Using a qualitative content analysis approach, interview transcripts and fieldnotes were analyzed to identify codes and themes. Results: Qualitative analysis of transcripts revealed five themes: 1) fear generated by the pandemic; 2) distress stemming from feeling extremely isolated; 3) belief in misinformation; 4) strategies for coping during the pandemic; and 5) the importance of access to essential services. Discussion and Implications: This pandemic put a spotlight on the precarity and unmet needs of older adults living alone with cognitive impairment living. Findings underscore the need to expand access to home care aides and mental health services for this population.

EVALUATING SERVICE-LEARNING WITH OLDER ADULTS ON UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
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Introduction: Students in the Frontiers in Human Aging course at UCLA participate in service-learning (SL) with older adults. In 2020, completion of SL coincided with the outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We evaluated the impact of SL on student attitudes on aging and community service in the context of the pandemic. Methods: Students were assigned to senior residential and daycare programs for 18-20 hours of SL. A retrospective pretest-posttest survey asked about attitudes and interests before and after SL and how the COVID-19 pandemic affected these perceptions; 73 (of 103) students responded.
Mean differences before and after SL were tested and differences were assessed within groups reporting COVID-19 effects. Results: SL improved students’ attitudes and ability to engage with older adults, knowledge about aging concepts, interest in future work with older adults, attitudes on community service, social wellbeing and feelings of usefulness (p<0.001). There was no significant change in overall anxiety about aging (p=0.1), however, students showed increased anxiety about losing independence and finances when older (p<0.05). At least 50% of students reported that the COVID-19 pandemic increased their awareness of needs of older adults (81.9%) and decreased connection to their peers (50.7%); the impact of SL remained unchanged by these effects. Conclusion: Despite the overall benefits of SL, increased anxiety about aspects of aging suggests the need to address these concerns. While the COVID-19 pandemic did not seem to affect the impact of SL, this event did seem to influence perceptions about aging and social integration.

**EVALUATION OF THE VA MEDICAL FOSTER HOME PROGRAM: FACTORS IMPORTANT FOR EXPANSION AND SUSTAINABILITY DURING COVID19**

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In 2020, the Center of Innovation for Veteran Centered and Value Driven Care (COIN) continued its monitoring and evaluation of the Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Foster Home (MFH) programs expansion into rural areas. Veterans in MFHs are provided 24/7 care by VA trained and supervised community caregivers and primary care by VA Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) teams. One year after the three-year (2017-2019) expansion funds stopped, COIN continued monitoring remaining programs. Objectives were to understand factors critical for program expansion and sustainability and the impact of COVID-19. Phone interviews were conducted with sixteen coordinators from seventeen programs. A thematic analysis approach was used to address the evaluation objectives using transcript data. Findings showed factors important to program sustainability were: 1) Program fit (finding caregivers in the community); and 2) Local VA facility support (staffing, adaptation, and local leadership support). COVID prompted losing some caregivers and prevented others from joining. Program staffing was not impacted as many program activities ceased. Recreational therapists (RTs) were significant to maintaining Veterans well-being and reducing social isolation through virtual activities. COVID required coordinators transition their supervision of MFHs to new virtual environments and HBPC to increase telehealth to new levels. Local leadership became important to monitoring local conditions and providing support to programs. The evaluation: 1) Found factors important to program sustainability were also critical to keeping programs operational during the pandemic; and 2) Stimulated future research on the suitability of MFH programs to meet challenges to resurgences of COVID or other national emergencies.

**EVERYDAY REMEMBERING DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC IN CARING DYADS**

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During the COVID-19 global pandemic people’s lived experiences and day-to-day lives have been tremendously impacted. This impact is believed to be more severe in people with a memory-impaired partner at home. As part of an ongoing cognitive intervention project with the Emory-Georgia Tech Cognitive Empowerment Program (CEP), we conducted interviews with dyads (one person with diagnosed amnestic mild cognitive impairment (aMCI) and one person, in this case, a spouse who is an identified care partner). To address the COVID-19 pandemic, we supplemented the existing interview about everyday cognition with several questions about the dyadic experience during the pandemic. To date, we have conducted 5 qualitative interviews with dyads. Preliminary results indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional everyday challenges and cognitive burden for care partners of people diagnosed with aMCI. Some of these challenges include the need to manage pandemic precautionary behaviors, such as mask wearing and maintaining social distancing, for both themselves and the care recipient. In contrast, some aspects of everyday remembering among these dyads have improved (e.g. more advance planning of things like grocery shopping and outings). The results of these interviews will provide additional unique insights into the everyday cognitive challenges of the pandemic on caregivers and persons with aMCI.

**EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON PSYCHOSOCIAL OUTCOMES ACROSS AGE: A STRESS AND COPING FRAMEWORK**

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The emergence of COVID-19 and the measures implemented to curb its spread are anticipated to have long-term implications for mental health. Older adults may be at increased risk for adverse mental health outcomes as opportunities to remain socially connected have diminished. Further research is needed to better understand the impact of pandemic-related stress on mental health. Utilizing the stress and coping framework, the purpose of this study is three-fold: 1) to examine the influences of COVID-19-related stress on depression, anxiety, and loneliness, 2) to assess the mediating role of coping style and social support, and 3) to investigate whether these relationships vary across age. Participants (N = 1,318) between the ages of 18-92 years completed an online survey, assessing pandemic-related stress, mental health, social support, coping, and their experiences with social distancing, during the initial implementation of social distancing measures in the United States. Stress, social support, and coping style were related to psychosocial outcomes. Results suggested that avoidant coping mediated the relationship between pandemic-related stress and psychosocial outcomes, particularly depression.