

AGEC/ GWEP Quarterly Newsletter - Volume XXIII, No.4, Fall 2017

# From the Director's Desk

by Robin McAtee, PhD, RN, FACHE, Director,
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(UAMS) Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging (DWR

This is my first "From the Director's desk" article from the Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative (AGEC), the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program for Arkansas. I am excited as we begin this year of grant activities and what this year holds for us. I have rather large shoes to fill with Dr. Chernoff handing the reigns of this grant to me in July of this year, but am very confident in that she has been an exceptional mentor to me for the past decade (or more) and is still by my side helping and guiding with sage advice! Thank you Dr. Chernoff for conceptualizing and implementing the AGEC initiatives for success and for your knowledge and leadership. The geriatric field and practitioners have benefited greatly from your

As we begin the final year of this three year grant, we are starting with...

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contributions!

# 2017 New Herpes Zoster Vaccine

#### By Ashley McPhee, PharmD Candidate and Lisa Hutchison, PharmD, MPH, UAMS

Herpes zoster, commonly known as shingles, is a viral infection that causes a painful rash. The rash usually occurs on one side from the middle of the back toward the chest, but it can occur in other areas as well. Shingles is the result of reactivation of the existing but undeveloped varicella zoster virus (VZV). This is the virus that causes chickenpox.1 Nearly all older adults have the VZV dormant in their nervous system because they were exposed to chicken pox as a child.2 Protection from reactivation is dependent on cell-mediated immunity. This type of immunity decreases as we age, if we have certain diseases, or medications. An example of disease and medications include Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and high dose steroid treatment. The average age for shingles to occur is...

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# Occupational Therapy Student's Poor Knowledge of Aging Demonstrates Need for Gerontological Literacy

By LaVona Traywick, PhD, Univerrsity of Central Arkansas (UCA) and Terry Griffin, PhD, Kansas State

Society as a whole is aging and there are not enough health care providers in any health related field, including Occupational Therapy, to meet the current or expected needs of the senior adult population (Eldercare Workforce Alliance, 2011). According to the Administration for Community Living (2016), the senior adult population makes up 14.5% of the population in the United States. This number is expected to increase to 21.7% by 2040. Results from the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (Ashman, 2015) indicated that senior adults aged 65 and over visited medical offices more than twice the rate than the remaining groups (adults aged 18–64 and children under age 18 years). The current literature shows...

University (KSU)

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# Health Literacy for Health Care Professionals

By Shanon Brantley, MCD, CCC-SLP, Arkansas State University (ASU) Communication is a complex task. Communication between healthcare professionals and patients often increases this complexity due to reduced or poor health literacy skills of patients. Health literacy refers to "the degree to which individuals can obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services they need to make appropriate health decisions" (Healthy People 2010). Approximately onethird of adult Americans, including nearly 820,000 Arkansans (37 percent) are affected by low health literacy (Bakker, Koffel, Theis-Mahon, 2017 and Coleman, Peterson-Perry, & Bumsted, 2016). Even more staggering is that 70 percent of older adults (65 yrs. and older) in the United States have low health literacy skills (Kobayashi, Wardle, Wolfe & Wagner, 2015 & Chesser, Woods, Smothers, & Rogers, 2017). The impact of low health literacy is associated with...

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# Million Veteran Program: A Partnership with Veterans

By Gretchen Gibson, DDS, MPH

Veterans Health Administration Central Office (VHACO), Fayetteville, Arkansas

During this month of celebrating Veteran's Day, it seemed appropriate to recognize another continued service of our Veterans, beyond their military time. The Million Veteran Program (MVP) is a research program designed to better understand how genes affect health and illness. Data collected as part of the MVP will help enhance disease screening, diagnosis and prognosis for both Veterans and all Americans.

Data collection began in 2011 at various VA hospitals throughout the United States. To date, the MVP has over half a million Veterans who have volunteered and enrolled. Therefore, this is now the world's largest genomic database, or genetic biorepository. Veterans who volunteer are asked to complete a short questionnaire and donate one vile of blood. This genetic data is linked to their questionnaire and the VA electronic health record to aid in the development of new diagnostic tests, precision or targeted medications, precision therapies and to look at the link of military exposures to genetic susceptibilities to aid in novel approaches to treating these conditions. Older veterans are...

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## <u>Upcoming</u> <u>Events</u>

Save the Dates for the AGEC Free 2-Hour Fall Video Teleconference!!

# December 13, 2017 "Safe Opioid Prescribing Practices

Adults/Substance

**Abuse and Misuse** 

for Older

Among Older
Adults" presented by
Masil George, MD,
Assistant Professor and
UAMS Geriatrician and
Pain Management
Specialist, Hospice
Medical Director &
Director of the Geriatric
Palliative Care Program,
and Denise Compton,
PhD, Assostant
professor and UAMS
Clinical Psychologist and

2 hours FREE
Continuing education
credits available for a
variety of disciplines.
Questions? Email us at

Neuropsychologist.

Geriatric

# agec@uams.edu \*\*\*\*\*\* Educational

**Opportunity!** 

Are you working with

learn more about the

older adults and want to

disease conditions and illnesses that affect this population? We have just the program for you --- Arkansas Geriatric Mentors and Scholars Program, also called **AR-GEMS** AR-GEMS is a 60-hour self-study program for all health professionals across disciplines who work with older adults and want to learn more about the aging process as well as improve the

GEMS, visit us at www.agec.org/argems/.

more information on AR-

delivery of care. For

# Pearls of Wisdom 5 Great Things About Growing Old

By Anne-Marie O'Neill

You'll be happier

As it turns out, most grumpy old people used to be grumpy young people.

Aging doesn't turn a cheerful person into a grouch. Research has shown that as we age, we become more emotionally

#### Wise Decisions Will Come More Easily

stable and content (Laura

Carstensen, 59)

Scientists used to think
that we lose a significant
number of our brain cells
as we age, but more
sophisticated scans have
debunked that theory. We
now know that we hit our
cognitive peak between
the ages of 40 and
68...we're better problem
solvers and can more
quickly get the gist of an
argument. It's the reason
why judges and presidents

## The Fashion Police Will be Off Your Back

tend to be middle-aged or

older...(Barbara Strauch,

Go ahead and wear fivefinger running shoes or
orthopedic sandals. No
longer must you prance
around in painful heels.
Now you can climb steep
steps past your wobblies in
magnificent toe-crushers.
You may have to feign a
small limp if you want men
to rush to your aid.(Gail
Sheehy, 74)

## You'll Know Who You Are

A sense of urgency comes with aging. Before I was 75, I was tentative about many things. But now, I know my own voice, and most important, I have the confidence to use it. Today I am blogging and giving speeches and participating in all sorts of activities that...I would have been incapable of back in my 60s. (Betty Reid Soskin,

## You'll Have Time on Your Hands

If you've been driving
yourself for years working, raising a family, or
both--it's an adjustment to
have spare time once your
job has slowed down and
the kids have flown the
coop. The good thing
about it is that you've seen
it all, lived it all, felt it all-and now you can take a
moment to share what
you've learned. (Annie
Kreamer, 55)

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