

## Older Adults Research

### TRO Research Hub: TR-Related Literature

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#### **Leisure and ageing well**

Dupuis, S. L., & Alzheimer, M. (2008). Leisure and ageing well. *World Leisure Journal*, 50(2), 91-107. doi:10.1080/04419057.2008.9674538

The world's population is ageing at unprecedented rates. Given the growth of the older adult population, it is not surprising that governments and policy makers in many regions throughout the world have been turning their attention to the implications of population ageing on social and economic development. More specifically, there has been much concern about the consequences of an ageing population on health care systems and costs and an emphasis on finding ways to help older adults age well. Leisure can play an important role in the ageing well process but, to a large extent, its role in healthy ageing is often overlooked by policy makers. This paper focuses on leisure in later life, particularly as it is related to notions of healthy ageing and ageing well. It summarises what we currently know about the role of leisure in later life. Although the relationship between leisure and ageing well is complex, the existing evidence is clear that leisure can provide meaningful opportunities for continued engagement in life—for being, becoming, and belonging (Renwick & Brown, 1996)—and is essential for ageing well. However, not all have equal access to leisure in later life, which can threaten the well-being of those who are marginalised in society. The paper also identifies some of the gaps in our understanding and concludes with a list of recommendations for future research on the role leisure can play in the ageing well process.

*Keywords: older adults, ageing population, leisure, healthy ageing, ageing well*

#### **Walking and the preservation of cognitive function in older populations**

Prohaska, T. R., Eisenstein, A. R., Satariano, W. A., Hunter, R., Bayles, C. M., Kurtovich, E., Kealey, M., & Ivey, S. L. (2009). Walking and the preservation of cognitive function in older populations. *The Gerontologist*, 49(S1). doi:10.1093/geront/gnp079

This cross-sectional study takes a unique look at the association between patterns of walking and cognitive functioning by examining whether older adults with mild cognitive impairment differ in terms of the community settings where they walk and the frequency, intensity, or duration of walking. The sample was based on interviews with 884 adults aged 65 years and older, residing in 4 locations across the United States: Alameda County, California; Cook County, Illinois; Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; and Durham/Wake Counties, North Carolina. Cognitive function was assessed using a modified Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) and the Mental Alternation Test (MAT). Multiple linear regressions were conducted between self-reported walking activities and cognitive measures, controlling for psychosocial, demographic, health status, functional performance, and neighborhood characteristics. The community setting where people walk and the intensity of walking in their neighborhood were significantly associated with cognitive status. After controlling for individual and neighborhood characteristics, better MAT scores were significantly associated with brisk walking and walking fewer times per week. Compared with the MMSE, the MAT was more likely to be associated with patterns of walking among older adults. Older adults with lower MAT scores were more likely to walk in indoor shopping malls and less in parks, whereas those with higher cognitive function scores on the MMSE were less likely to walk in indoor gyms. This investigation provides insight into the extent to which walking is associated with preservation of cognitive health, setting the stage for future longitudinal studies and community-based interventions.

*Keywords: cognitive performance, physical activity, environmental barriers, person-environment fit*

### **Identifying the satisfactions derived from leisure gardening by older adults**

Cheng, E. H., Patterson, I., Packer, J., & Pegg, S. (2010). Identifying the satisfactions derived from leisure gardening by older adults. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 13(3), 395-419.  
doi:10.1080/11745398.2010.9686855

Gardening is a popular leisure activity among older adults in most Western countries. However, few systematic academic studies have focused on the benefits of gardening engaged in by this cohort. The purpose of this study was to identify the contribution of gardening to the leisure and life satisfaction of older adults. Self-administered questionnaire surveys were completed by 433 older adults who were recruited at a 'Gardening Australia Expo' held in Brisbane, Queensland in April 2009. Findings of this study indicated that older adults obtained high levels of leisure satisfaction specifically from the relaxation, psychological and physiological aspects of

gardening. Those whose engagement in gardening was at the level of serious leisure received the greatest satisfaction. Most participants reported that gardening contributed to their overall life satisfaction. Implications for future studies and leisure providers are discussed.

*Keywords: leisure gardening, older adults, leisure satisfaction, leisure engagement, life satisfaction*

### **Effects of balance-focused interactive games compared to therapeutic balance classes for older women**

Singh, D. K. A., Rajaratnam, B. S., Palaniswamy, V., Raman, V. P., Bong, P. S., & Pearson, H. (2012). Effects of balance-focused interactive games compared to therapeutic balance classes for older women. *Climacteric*, 16(1), 141-146. doi:10.3109/13697137.2012.664832

The prospective pre–post control study was designed to evaluate the effect of introducing balance-focused interactive virtual-reality games to community-dwelling older women to improve their agility, balance and functional mobility. The study was set in a senior citizens' club in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The participants were 36 community-dwelling older women. Participants were randomly divided into either a group undertaking balance-focused virtual-reality games or a group doing therapeutic balance exercises. The program lasted 6 weeks and was conducted twice a week for 40 min during each session. As the main outcome measures, the results of the Ten Step Test (TST), postural sway (overall performance index, OPI) and the Timed Up and Go test (TUG) were measured pre- and post-intervention to evaluate agility, balance and functional mobility, respectively. Although both groups improved in OPI ( $F = 4.63$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), TST ( $F = 46.15$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and TUG ( $F = 52.57$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ), combined time and group interaction only improved in the TUG ( $F = 4.54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). No significant differences between the two groups were found in terms of TST ( $F = 0.02$ ,  $p = 0.86$ ), OPI ( $F = 0.66$ ,  $p = 0.42$ ), and TUG ( $F = 0.11$ ,  $p = 0.74$ ). Older people could improve their agility, balance and functional mobility by complementing therapeutic balance exercises with active participation in interactive virtual-reality games at home or in the community.

*Keywords: virtual reality, balance, agility, functional mobility, community-dwelling older women*

### **A conceptual model for aging better together intentionally**

Glass, A. P., & Vander Plaats, R. S. (2013). A conceptual model for aging better together intentionally. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27(4), 428-442. doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2013.10.001

Social networks and improved health outcomes are strongly connected, yet many elders face isolation and loneliness. This article presents a study of an elder cohousing community in which residents are dealing with aging-related stresses as a group and creating positive outcomes for themselves. The article posits a conceptual model of how this phenomenon of “aging better together intentionally” occurs and the resulting benefits. QUESTIONS: What happens when elders choose to live together in a community in which they consciously address aging collectively? Is it possible to age better together intentionally? If so, what does it look like, under what circumstances does it blossom, and how does it improve the aging experience?

METHODS: In-depth interviews were conducted with 26 residents of an elder cohousing community in 2009. Respondents were white, mostly female, and averaged 73 years in age. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts led to a conceptual model of aging better together intentionally. To further explore the model, quantitative survey data were collected from the residents three years later. RESULTS: The framework of communal coping provided the mechanism of aging better together intentionally. Quantitative data supported the existence of mutual support, increased acceptance of aging, and feelings of safety/less worry/lessening of social isolation as benefits of this type of living arrangement. DISCUSSION: This research demonstrates the agency of older adults, the heterogeneity of the aging experience, and the value of older adults sharing their knowledge of the aging process with each other. Our conceptual model of aging better together intentionally could serve as a basis for interventions in other settings to provide a new way for people to age together with enhanced quality of life.

*Keywords: interdependence, solidarity in aging, stress, senior housing, intentional community, cohousing, communal coping*

### **The relationship between outdoor recreation and depression among older adults**

Christensen, K. M., Holt, J. M., & Wilson, J. F. (2013). The relationship between outdoor recreation and depression among older adults. *World Leisure Journal*, 55(1), 72-82. doi:10.1080/04419057.2012.759143

Depression in older adults contributes to decreased health, increased mortality and lower quality of life. As participation in outdoor recreation has been correlated with decreased depression levels among other populations, it is hypothesised that higher participation in outdoor recreation will be correlated with lower depression levels among older adults. In particular this study examined whether participation in outdoor recreation was associated with reported symptoms of depression among adults aged 65 years and older. To do so, regression, ANOVA and t-tests were used to examine an existing statewide survey of 1216 Montana, USA residents aged 65 years and older. The findings indicate a correlation between outdoor recreation participation and lower depression levels. Current major depression was more prevalent among individuals over 65 years of age who had not participated in outdoor recreation during the past year. The strongest negative correlation existed among individuals over 65 years of age who participated in outdoor recreation four or more times per week. Further study examining the causality of this relationship is suggested, given the significant potential to improve older adults' quality of life.

*Keywords: outdoor recreation, depression, older adults, research methods*

### **Participatory arts for older adults: A review of benefits and challenges**

Noice, T., Noice, H., & Kramer, A. F. (2013). Participatory arts for older adults: A review of benefits and challenges. *The Gerontologist*, 54(5), 741-753. doi:10.1093/geront/gnt138

This article reviews the scientific literature on the enhancement of healthy aging in older adults through active participation in the arts. Methodologies and conclusions are described for studies of dance, expressive writing, music (singing and instrumental), theatre arts, and visual arts including documentation of mental/physical improvements in memory, creativity, problem solving, everyday competence, reaction time, balance/gait, and quality of life. In addition to these gains in measures of successful aging, the article also provides (in a Supplementary Appendix) some selected examples of arts engagement for remedial purposes. Finally, it offers suggestions for expanding inquiry into this underinvestigated corner of aging research.

*Keywords: arts, cognition, quality of life, health benefits, older adults*

### **Purpose and pleasure in late life: Conceptualising older womens participation in art and craft activities**

Liddle, J. L., Parkinson, L., & Sibbritt, D. W. (2013). Purpose and pleasure in late life: Conceptualising older womens participation in art and craft activities. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27(4), 330-338. doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2013.08.002

The fourth age, as the last stage of life, represents a final challenge to find personal meaning in the face of changing capacities, illness and disability. Participation in valued activities is important for sustaining interest in life and has been associated with enhanced health and well-being. Art and craft activities are a popular form of participation amongst women in late life with growing international interest in the potential for these types of activities to maintain health and well-being and address problems of social isolation. Drawing on open text comments from 114 women enrolled in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health and in-depth interviews with 23 women all aged in their eighties, this paper explores the nature of older women's participation in art and craft activities and conceptualises links between participation in these activities and health and well-being in late life. Participation in art and craft activities is complex and dynamic, comprising cognitive and physical processes infused with emotion and occurs in the context of social relationships, physical spaces, physical ailments and beliefs about the value of the activities. By participating in art and craft activities, older women find purpose in their lives, contributing to their subjective well-being whilst helping and being appreciated by others. They develop a self view as enabled and as such take on new art and craft challenges, continue to learn and develop as art and craft makers and remain open to new possibilities.

*Keywords: fourth age, art, participation, women, theory development, well-being*

### **Successful aging among LGBT older adults: Physical and mental health-related quality of life by age group**

Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I., Kim, H., Shiu, C., Goldsen, J., & Emlen, C. A. (2014). Successful aging among LGBT older adults: Physical and mental health-related quality of life by age group. *The Gerontologist*, 55(1), 154-168. doi:10.1093/geront/gnu081

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people are a health disparate population as identified in Healthy People 2020. Yet, there has been limited attention to how LGBT older adults maintain successful aging despite the adversity they face. Utilizing a Resilience Framework, this study investigates the relationship between physical and mental health-related

quality of life (QOL) and covariates by age group. A cross-sectional survey of LGBT adults aged 50 and older (N = 2,560) was conducted by Caring and Aging with Pride: The National Health, Aging, and Sexuality Study via collaborations with 11 sites across the U.S. Linear regression analyses tested specified relationships and moderating effects of age groups (aged 50–64; 65–79; 80 and older). Physical and mental health QOL were negatively associated with discrimination and chronic conditions and positively with social support, social network size, physical and leisure activities, substance nonuse, employment, income, and being male when controlling for age and other covariates. Mental health QOL was also positively associated with positive sense of sexual identity and negatively with sexual identity disclosure. Important differences by age group emerged and for the old–old age group the influence of discrimination was particularly salient. This is the first study to examine physical and mental health QOL, as an indicator of successful aging, among LGBT older adults. An understanding of the configuration of resources and risks by age group is important for the development of aging and health initiatives tailored for this growing population.

*Keywords: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, (LGBT) aging, health, diversity, healthy aging, successful aging, life course*

### **Interventions to increase physical activity among older adults: A meta-analysis**

Chase, J. D. (2014). Interventions to increase physical activity among older adults: A meta-analysis. *The Gerontologist*, 55(4), 706-718. doi:10.1093/geront/gnu090

To determine the overall effectiveness of interventions designed to increase physical activity (PA) behavior among community-dwelling older adults. Comprehensive literature searching identified eligible PA intervention studies among community-dwelling adults aged 65 and older, or sample mean age of 70. Diverse study characteristics were extracted and outcome data were duplicate coded. Overall mean effect sizes (ESs) were synthesized using a random-effects model. Heterogeneity of effects was analyzed using Q and I<sup>2</sup> statistics. Moderator analyses were conducted using meta-analytic analogues of ANOVA and regression for dichotomous and continuous moderators, respectively. ESs were calculated from 13,829 primary study subjects. The overall mean ES for two-group posttest comparisons was 0.18 (95% CI 0.10–0.26,  $p < .001$ ). This represents a difference of 620 steps/day or 73min of PA/week between treatment and control groups. Significant moderators included the use of theory, how interventions were delivered, and cognitive plus behavioral-type intervention components. Non-significant moderators include the type of interventionist, delivery setting, and various measures of intervention dose. PA interventions significantly improved PA behavior among community-

dwelling older adults. Effective PA interventions may be efficiently delivered using already available resources and personnel. Future PA intervention research should be theoretically based, incorporate more diverse subjects, and compare intervention delivery methods.

*Keywords: exercise, systematic review, physical activity, heterogeneity, adult, elderly, community, treatment effectiveness*

### **‘Our time’ program: Aging at home**

Morellato, A., & Ng-Gerritsen, Y. (2015). ‘Our time’ program: Aging at home. *Therapeutic Recreation: Practice & Research Journal of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario*. 10, 34-42.

As Canada’s population increases and continues to age, there is great interest in helping older adults remain in their homes. High numbers of older adults are not adequately supported by our current healthcare system, and there is an increased need for creative solutions to help older adults within the community. Promoting active and healthy lifestyles for older adults is vital in preventative health care. This article describes a community-based program, Our Time, for older adults in private apartment buildings, run by a not-for-profit community agency in Toronto. An Aging at Home framework was developed based on the project goals of promoting active lifestyle, social connection, and education, to ultimately assist older adults to age in place. The overall aim of the project was to develop a social recreation program based on participants’ needs and interests, to foster independence and well-being, and ensure sustainability of the program by encouraging participants’ involvement and leadership. After recruitment and assessments, participants took part in on-site weekly programs led by recreation therapists at no cost. Program evaluation results indicated increased social connection, and the development of a strong self-supportive network within participant groups. Group programs are now being facilitated independently by volunteer participants without the leadership of recreation therapists. These findings indicate the success of the Our Time program. Implications of this study suggest the value of this type of program for use in other community housing to support isolated and frail older adults to live at home for as long as possible.

*Keywords: older adults, program, social isolation, community, independence, active aging*

### **Family member's perception of well-being during transition to long term care**

Bos, K., Newmeyer, T., Ruocco, K., Whyte, C., & Woodbeck, H. (2015). Family member's perception of well-being during transition to long term care. *Therapeutic Recreation: Research & Practice Journal of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario*. 10, 50-62.

The purpose of the research is to gain a firsthand account of the experiences that family members encounter during the process of transitioning a relative into a long term care (LTC) facility and determine the overall well-being throughout the transition. The researchers wanted to enhance their knowledge of the perspectives and experiences of family members who are moving a relative into a LTC home as well as explore how this transition affects their well-being. There were two female participants and one male participant from different families involved in the study. Qualitative interviews were conducted for each participant in order to hear about their thoughts, feelings, opinions, and lived experiences during this life transition. The research and results were divided into different categories that provided us with an overall picture of this type of transition. These categories include personal experience of the transition, experience within the LTC home, emotional experiences, changes in lifestyle, and supports. Findings showed that this type of life transition happens quickly, and there is a lot of additional stress put onto the caregivers. Of interest, participants in this particular study did not see a decrease in their personal leisure time as they used it as an escape from their additional daily stress.

*Keywords: well-being, family members, long term care, stress, transition, leisure*

### **Confronting ageism through therapeutic recreation practice**

Genoe, M. R., & Whyte, C. (2015). Confronting ageism through therapeutic recreation practice. *Leisure/Loisir*, 39(2), 235-252. doi:10.1080/14927713.2015.1086583

Stereotyping based on age is one of the most tolerated forms of social prejudice in Canada. These discriminatory attitudes and assumptions have negative consequences on many aspects of life, including participation in leisure, particularly if these assumptions are internalized and accepted as reality. We consider the contributions of therapeutic recreation (TR) and TR practitioners in challenging ageism by advocating for a return to the roots of leisure, focusing on leisure's potential to draw out individual strengths and abilities thereby resisting various forms of ageism through agency and action. We examine the field's focus on biomedical outcomes and highlight how this paradigm serves to undermine opportunities for meaningful leisure experiences. We suggest ways by which a return to meaningful leisure in later life may enable

older adults to resist discriminatory practices. We conclude by presenting a blueprint for TR practitioners that encompasses a broader, socially relevant scope of practice through self-reflection and action.

*Keywords: leisure, ageism, activism, stigma, therapeutic recreation*

### **Beyond bingo: A phenomenographic exploration of leisure in aged care**

Miller, E. (2016). Beyond bingo: A phenomenographic exploration of leisure in aged care. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 48(1). doi:10.18666/jlr-2016-v48-i1-6254

How do older adults living in residential aged care experience leisure activities? What restricts and facilitates participation? These two research questions guided this semi-longitudinal qualitative research, tracking the lived experience of aged care from the perspective of 20 new-aged care residents over 18 months (average age, 80 years) through repeated in-depth semi-structured interviews. Interview data were analyzed using *phenomenography*, an under-utilized qualitative analysis technique that identifies the variations in how people experience, understand, or conceive of a phenomenon. Phenomenography revealed three qualitatively different ways to understand residents' leisure experience: (1) as a structure for living, (2) creating social connections and (3) maintaining ability. By illustrating the variation and similarities in how these older Australian residents conceptualise and experience leisure in aged care, the findings may help facilitate a more thoughtful understanding that informs theory, policy, and practice.

*Keywords: activities, ageing, leisure, nursing home, qualitative research*

### **Connecting generations: Sienna senior living's cyber-senior program**

Curcuruto, E., Fitzpatrick, K., Gibson, J., & Roul, S. (2016). Connecting generations: Sienna senior living's cyber-senior program. *Therapeutic Recreation: Research & Practice Journal of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario*. 11, 40-49.

In June 2014, Sienna Senior Living established a formal partnership with Cyber-Seniors. Their goal was to bridge the digital divide experienced by the residents of Sienna's 57 Retirement Residences and Long-Term Care (LTC) Communities. The Cyber-Seniors program at Sienna helps to build relationships between residents and high school student volunteers in supporting

residents to connect in new and meaningful ways via the Internet. Through this partnership, residents learn how to connect digitally with family, learn new skills such as fine motor, recall and basic computer literacy, which fosters residents' participation in and increasingly cyber world. The program inspires students to make a difference in their community by sharing their technological skills with an older generation. For residents, the program is dedicated to life-long learning, growth, and assisting each resident to live fully every day. Through Cyber-Seniors, Sienna's care communities are enacting our mission to awaken our communities to positive possibilities of life's next chapters. This practice-based paper outlines the partnership between Sienna and Cyber-Seniors, provides an overarching framework of this meaningful program for residents, and brings awareness to Cyber-Seniors' global call to action.

*Keywords: social inclusion, older adults, lifelong learning, partnerships, inter-generational program, situational leadership*

### **Integrating relationship-based care into a seniors adult day program**

Labombard-Casaert, J., & Doak, J. (2016). Integrating relationship-based care into a seniors adult day program. *Therapeutic Recreation: Research & Practice Journal of Therapeutic Recreation Ontario*. 11, 20-39.

Relationship-Based Care (RBC) is described as the process by which 'the power of relationships is leveraged across the organization to create caring and healing environments where the clients and families are truly the centre of the caring practice' (Creative Health Care Management). Our organization chose the model of RBC based on the involvement and commitment of the three main relationships—relationship to self, relationship to co-workers, and relationship to clients. It is through these experiences that a healing relationship is created, which is the heart of RBC (Koloroutis, 2004). RBC has eight elements; caring and healing environment, leadership, teamwork, professional practice, care delivery, resources and outcomes, and commitment to coworkers, all of which play an important role in successful care (Koloroutis, 2004). Additionally, 12 values guided and supported the team daily. As each value was reviewed, the team worked to incorporate that value into their daily work to improve the environment and outcomes for clients and measure daily program successes. Relationship Based Care has enhanced all of our communication interactions on a daily basis and made us re-evaluate processes involving the integration and enhancement of Therapeutic Recreation programming ensuring optimal focus on all eight elements.

*Keywords: relationship-centred care, relationships, care, framework, integrating, inclusive*