

determinants (health status, gender, education, age) in the conceptualization of health and health outcomes within an aging population.

DETERMINANTS OF GENERAL WELL-BEING IN BLACK MALES WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS

Darlington Atakere¹, *1. University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, United States*

Over the last decades, considerable attention has been directed towards examining the well-being of people living with chronic illness. The presence of one or more chronic illnesses challenges their quality of life and general well-being, thus, impacting their abilities to function physically, psychologically, and socially. I investigated reports of general well-being in Black males with chronic illness(es) in a sample of N=242 participants. The males were aged 35–63 and identified as Black/African American males. The participants responded to items assessing general well-being; ethnic identity; self-esteem; active coping; the presence of chronic illness(es); and additional demographic, social and ecological characteristics. Analyses of responses indicated that marital status, ethnic identity, self-esteem are significant determinants of general well-being in Black males with chronic illness(es). Data further showed active coping to be negatively correlated with well-being. I discuss the implications of results for the understanding of health outcomes among this marginalized population.

SPIRITUALITY IN CHRONIC PAIN SELF-MANAGEMENT: LOWER USE BUT EQUAL IMPORTANCE IN OLDER AFRICAN AMERICANS

Staja Booker¹, *1. The University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, United States*

Spirituality is a key social determinant of health for African Americans (AAs) and strongly impacts management of chronic pain. Older AAs (average age 68± 12.37) from urban and rural communities completed questionnaires (N=110) and audio-recorded, semi-structured individual interviews (N= 18) describing osteoarthritis pain self-management. Prayer was used by 42% of AAs, with substantially fewer attending church (23.6%), watching religious television or reading the Bible/Christian literature (20.9%), listening to gospel music (18.2%), and laying of hands (8.2%). Interestingly, prayer and church attendance were the only pain strategies rated by more participants as very helpful. Regardless of religiosity, most AAs believed that spirituality was “an important aspect, whether we realize it always or not”. Specifically, prayer was considered “number one... ‘cause I know it’s gonna be all right once I do pray...prayer help heal the pain”. Spiritual strategies remain integral for chronic pain self-management despite lower than expected use among AAs.

SESSION 2085 (SYMPOSIUM)

POLICY SERIES: INTERDISCIPLINARY PUBLIC POLICY DISCUSSION SESSION

Chair: Linda K. Harootyan, *Wilmington, North Carolina, United States*

Discussant: Brian W. Lindberg, *The Gerontological Society of America, Washington, District of Columbia, United States*

This session, organized by the GSA Public Policy Committee, will provide both GSA section leadership and attendees an opportunity to have an open dialogue on important public policy issues of significance to the aging population. Section leaders will discuss key policy issues of particular relevance to their section’s mission and purpose. They also will comment on improving physical and mental health to illustrate how their different disciplines and perspectives inform and apply to public policy on that issue. This will be an interactive session with plenty of opportunity for audience feedback and input.

PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Scott Leiser¹, *1. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States*

This presentation will cover public policy issues of significance to the aging population, focusing on the perspective of the biological sciences and on policies that may improve physical and mental health.

PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE IN SOCIAL RESEARCH, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

Robert Harootyan¹, *1. Senior Service America Inc., Silver Spring, Maryland, United States*

This presentation will cover public policy issues of significance to the aging population, focusing on the perspective of the social research, policy and practice community and on policies that may improve physical and mental health.

POLICY PRIORITIES: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Karl Pillemer¹, *1. Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, United States*

This presentation will cover public policy issues of significance to the aging population, focusing on the perspective of the behavioral and social sciences and on policies that may improve physical and mental health.

SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Stephen Kritchevsky¹, *1. Wake Forest School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, United States*

This presentation will cover public policy issues of significance to the aging population, focusing on the perspective of the health sciences and on policies that may improve physical and mental health.

SESSION 2090 (SYMPOSIUM)

IS AGING AN ACQUIRED MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASE?

Chair: Alessandro Bitto, *University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, United States*

Mitochondrial dysfunction is a hallmark of aging, but severe mitochondrial dysfunction leads to rare childhood