

OLDER ADULTS IN RESEARCH NEWSLETTER



Research is Changing the Way We Age

by Kathryn Nearing, PhD

For two years, this Older Adults in Research newsletter has featured cutting-edge research with the promise of new discoveries. From studies that help us better understand the aging process and how health interventions such as diet and exercise affect our bodies as we age, we can make more informed decisions that can improve independence, quality of life and longevity. Research can also provide healthcare professionals with more information to guide their clinical decision making, for example, when prescribing medications or physical therapy for older adults.

Older Adults Are Changing the Way We Do Research

In addition to aging-related research, each edition of this newsletter has featured an Older Adult Research Specialist – an older adult who is pursuing an encore career in research supporting the recruitment and retention of older adult peers in clinical trials. Just like Kathy Chaten, the Older Adult Research Specialist profiled in this issue, OARS help older adults learn about clinical studies of interest and help address common barriers to participating. The Harvard Business Review recently featured this initiative as an innovative workforce development program that is retaining older adults, not only in studies that are transforming the way we age, but in the workforce to transform the way we do research. Please click on this link: <https://hbr.org/2024/03/redesigning-retirement> to read the Harvard Business Review article: Redesigning Retirement



Multidisciplinary Center on Aging

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering Employs Multi-generational Team to Foster Innovation

by Elizabeth Coughanour, MS

On Friday morning, staff from the Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE) at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus gather. They include researchers, engineers, clinicians, industry professionals and students.

During the meeting, a researcher updates the group on user testing of a smart home technology for a residential facility; a wheelchair seating expert shares a success story from a client; another team member shares information about a new assistive device for preschool children. The conversation crosses the life span: from solutions tailored for infants, to opportunities for bioengineering students, to research aimed at addressing the needs of older adults.



Dr. Cathy Bodine, director, leads the discussion. Her overarching goal is to foster connections between people who care deeply about their own piece of a staggeringly large puzzle: how to create a world that is accessible and inclusive for everyone. CIDE's mission is to develop and implement technology solutions so that people with disabilities can fully participate in life's activities.

A critical component of the work is research, which ranges from designing new technology solutions for people of all ages who are living with functional impairments to usability testing and clinical trials. The entire CIDE team and a community of collaborators must work together. For example, Kathy Chaten is an Older Adult Research Specialist on the team. Her focus is recruiting individuals for CIDE research studies. She shared, "I want to make this a good experience for people when they come in for a study. If you have a person who is worried their car is going to be towed or their meter will run out, or they'll get lost, they won't have a good experience."



“I can give people directions, meet them in the parking lot, speak with them while they wait...” She continued, “The more personal service I can provide, the better their experience will be.”

- Kathy Chaten



Living with, or aging into, a disability is challenging for individuals, their loved ones, the community, and care teams. CIDE’s team members maintain a steady focus on human-centered design in everything they do so solutions are feasible and can be used by those they are intended to support.

Older Adult Research Specialist Spotlight: Kathy Chaten

1. Share with us a bit about your personal and professional background.

Colorado became my home in the 70's when I started practicing tax law in Denver. Over the years, I have been an educator at the secondary, collegiate, and graduate levels. Jeffco Public Schools gave me an opportunity in human resources with a primary responsibility for teacher recruitment and retention. What I have learned from this non-linear career path: No matter the job, I enjoy people.



Kathy Chaten

2. What was your motivation to join the Older Adult Research Specialist Training Program?

As a member of the CaReNet Patient Advisory Council for 14 years, I developed an appreciation for community engagement in research. CaReNet demonstrated the commitment of the medical community to engage patients to improve outcomes. Becoming an Older Adult Research Specialist felt like the next logical step to expand my education and involvement in patient participation at various stages of research.

3. What would you like older adults to know about the importance of participating in research -- clinical trials, specifically?

Clinical studies are an integral component of medicine. Your participation in research is important and selfless. Do not let the details of your participation (scheduling, parking, buildings, mobility...) stand in the way. Let the research team know what you want and need to participate.

4. What advice, as an OARS, would you give research teams that require older adult participation?

After an individual qualifies and agrees to participate in a study, the research group needs to affirmatively communicate that it values the participant as an individual and not because he/she qualifies for the study. Each participant must be acknowledged as an individual and not a member of a statistical group.

Kathy Chaten works as an Older Adult Research Specialist for the CU Anschutz Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE). In this role, Kathy focuses on assisting research teams to engage participants for CIDE research studies that develop assistive technologies.

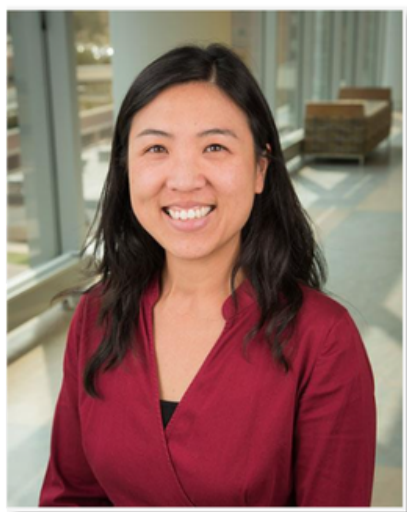
CaReNet (Colorado Research Network) is a group of clinical practices with the goal of improving the health and well-being of disadvantaged populations.

Caregiver VOICE Study invites Caregivers to Share their Experience Providing Care for a Person Living with Dementia

by Robin Otto


Do you support someone who is living with dementia? Do you sometimes feel alone and unheard? We value your VOICE. By sharing your personal experiences, you can help to improve the quality of dementia care.

As a care partner or caregiver, you have a unique perspective and play a vital role in caring for the person with dementia. Your lived experiences and well-being are significant factors to consider when exploring ways to improve dementia care.



Dr. Hillary Lum, associate professor in the Division of Geriatric Medicine at University of Colorado School of Medicine, knows what it's like to be a caregiver for a parent living with dementia. She helps her father care for her mother, who lives with Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Lum has also experienced that there are limited opportunities to give feedback on her mom's dementia care.

Dr. Lum's research team is looking for more than 300 family care partners to answer questions related to dementia care, including support for mood, cognition, safety and access to community resources. The telephone-based survey will also explore the caregivers' own experiences and well-being, as well as suggestions. Dr. Lum explained, "The types of questions we're asking cause reflection. Some people will tell us, 'We haven't even thought about that.'"



Dr. Lum's Caregiver VOICE study is funded by the Alzheimer's Association.

For more information about this study, please contact:

✉ dementia.care@cuanschutz.edu

🌐 www.bit.ly/CaregiverVOICE

📞 303-724-8466

Or scan the QR code!



2024 Research RoadShow Schedule

Research Roadshows provide fun, accessible, personally meaningful opportunities for older adults to learn new information about aging and explore different types of aging-related research studies. We offer interactive presentations on topics of interest, opportunities to try out new innovations in aging and provide feedback to researchers, and to discover studies of interest that are enrolling older adults.

For inquiries and updated schedule information, please contact us at OlderAdultResearch@cuanschutz.edu:

- Kavod on the Road AgeTech RR: Temple Sinai, 3509 S. Glencoe St., Denver: Wednesday, March 13, 9am-1pm. Kavod on the Road is a consortium of Denver organizations serving older adults.
- Chaffee County RR: Chaffee County Fairgrounds in Salida, CO: Friday, May 17, 9am-2pm. Partners include Chaffee County Public Health Department and Colorado Mountain College.
- CU Anschutz Multidisciplinary Center on Aging (2nd Annual) Aging Research Symposium and 20th Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Geriatrics Conference: Thursday-Friday, September 19-20, on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Anschutz Health Sciences Building.

THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
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VOICE



Caregiver VOICE Survey Study



Participate in a Research Study about Caregiver Perspectives

We want to understand dementia care quality from the perspective of caregivers of people living with dementia. The University of Colorado Multidisciplinary Center on Aging is currently recruiting for a research study (COMIRB #23-0854) funded by the Alzheimer's Association.

Who is eligible to participate?

- Aged 18 or older
- Provides care to a person living with dementia

Details of the Study:

- Eligible participants who enroll in the study will be asked to answer survey questions at up to 2 time points about 1 month apart.
- Surveys take 30-45 minutes.
- Participants are eligible to receive a \$25 gift card
- The survey asks about your demographics, perspective on dementia care quality, and experiences as a support person for someone with dementia

For more information about this important study, please contact:

- dementia.care@cuanschutz.edu
- 303-724-8466
- www.bit.ly/CaregiverVOICE
- Or scan the QR code

SCAN
TO LEARN
MORE!



COMIRB #23-0854 | PI: Hillary Lum, MD, PhD



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Scan the code to learn how you can play an active role in improving health care for older adults.



Visit research.cuanschutz.edu/olderadults

For additional questions, inquiries can be directed to:

OlderAdultResearch@cuanschutz.edu

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Funding support provided by NIH/National Institute on Aging 1R24AG071459