

OLDER ADULTS IN RESEARCH NEWSLETTER



Research is one way you can make a difference!

by Kathryn Nearing, PhD

Did you know? Older adults are among the populations underrepresented in clinical trials – the type of research that leads to new ways to prevent, detect and treat conditions that affect health. Consequently, healthcare providers often lack information to guide their care of older adults.

Participation by older adults in research can help address this evidence gap and lead to new discoveries that promote mobility, independence, longevity and quality of life.

The Multi-disciplinary Center on Aging at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is leading efforts to support the inclusion of older adults in research to improve healthcare and health outcomes.

With funding support from the National Institute on Aging, we are organizing Research Roadshows that travel around the state, providing fun, experiential opportunities for older adults (and those who may attend with them) to learn about and engage in research.

Research Roadshows offer opportunities to:

- Explore the Older Adult Research Roadshow Hub where you can participate in user testing of assistive devices. Through user testing, you will experience how your own participation in research can improve the products of research for older adults.
- Meet Older Adult Research Specialists – older adults who are pursuing encore careers dedicated to increasing the inclusion of older adults in research. Much like health navigators or promotoras, Older Adult Research Specialists are navigators for their community, helping to facilitate the participation of older adults and other underrepresented populations in research.



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- Get connected to clinical trials recruiting older adults in your area.
- Work with a computer literacy instructor who can assist with connecting to free/low-cost internet access (to support remote research study participation), the CU Anschutz research studies website and demonstrate how to complete tasks required of study participation, such as downloading and uploading an informed consent document.

To learn more about participating in Research Roadshows, please take a picture of the QR code using your smartphone. CONNECT WITH US at www.research.cuanschutz.edu/olderadults or OlderAdultResearch@cuanschutz.edu.



CU Anschutz Safe at Home Research Study

by Jodi Waterhouse, MHA

The Safe at Home trial studies the effectiveness of different approaches to reaching populations that may be impacted by Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias (ADRDs). This Safe at Home Trial provides a resource to support caregivers and patients in making decisions to enhance safety at home. The free, online educational resource is unique in the comprehensive way in which access to firearms and safe storage options are addressed.



Emmy Betz, MD, MPH

Dr. Emmy (Marian) Betz and her research team created the Safe at Home resource after interviewing medical providers (e.g. geriatricians, neurologists); dementia caregivers (both professional and informal); firearm owners; members of ADRD organizations; and other professionals (firearm retail owners and employees, lawyers and medical reporters). Dr. Betz is an emergency medicine physician who works clinically at the UCHHealth Emergency Department (ED) and also conducts research in injury prevention, including firearm safety for those experiencing suicidal ideation. She co-founded and leads the Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition, a collaborative effort between public health, medical professionals and firearm retailers to reduce firearm-related injuries.

NEEDED: OLDER ADULTS

"Older persons were consistently denied inclusion in clinical trials of treatments, including those particularly relevant to them" (Chang et al. 2020:15)



"Medications and vaccines commonly used in older adults have not been adequately evaluated in this population" (Veronese et al. 2021:4)



"Older patients [particularly those >75] remained disproportionately under-represented in clinical trials of Alzheimer's disease" (Chang et al. 2020:14)



"ANYTIME WE HAVE CHRONIC UNDER REPRESENTATION OF ANY GIVEN POPULATION, WE'RE NOT GOING TO UNDERSTAND THE MEDICAL NEEDS AND HOW THE PROPOSED TREATMENTS WILL WORK FOR THAT POPULATION."

-Dr. Julie K. Silver, Harvard Medical School

YOU CAN.... MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Clinical trials are strictly monitored by independent review boards to ensure participants' safety and privacy.

Advances in mobility, independence and longevity are gained through clinical research.

Because older adults participated in research, we know people with more positive views of aging live an average 7.5 years longer.



To learn more, please visit us at:
research.cuanschutz.edu/olderadults
or you can email us directly at:
OlderAdultResearch@cuanschutz.edu.



Douglas (Bucky) Dilts is an Older Adult Research Specialist at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and member of the study team. Bucky works to get information about the Safe at Home research study to care partners of individuals with Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias. His outreach and recruitment efforts also extend to healthcare providers and other groups focused on promoting firearm safety.

Bucky is connecting with individuals across Colorado in-person and online. Bucky’s commitment to this study has produced recruitment blurbs in state-wide newsletters and connections with stakeholders within the older adult and firearm arena, demonstrating his ability to use his Older Adult Research Specialist training to provide input and produce results for the Safe at Home study.

**DEMENTIA
CAREGIVERS
WANTED!**



Receive
compensation
up to \$180

Help develop resources to
reduce in-home firearms risk
for someone with dementia

Join our research study!



Department of Emergency Medicine
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
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SAFEatHOME

**For more information about how to get involved with
Safe at Home, please scan the QR code above.**

Participating in Research Builds New Knowledge, Social Connections and Hope for a Better Future

An Interview with Bucky Dilts, CU Anschutz Older Adult Research Specialist

by Jerry Dansky, CU Anschutz Older Adult Research Specialist

1. Bucky, please share a bit about your personal and professional background:

I worked in sales/sales management for more than 40 years in several industries, including records management/laser printing and commercial real estate. During that time, I also volunteered for various mental health organizations, Medicaid clinics and assisted the University of Colorado's Athletic Department in setting up a crisis line for their alumni. I am a 14-year prostate cancer survivor and have participated in promotions including the Pints for Prostates and Prostate Conditions Education Council.



Bucky Dilts

2. What was your motivation to complete the 14-week Older Adult Research Specialist Training Program at CU Anschutz?

I was looking for something to keep me engaged with people and to continue to learn and stay active in my own health. My family health history includes family members who have been diagnosed with cancer (prostate, colon, lung) and unfortunately, we have also experienced suicide within the family. It was important to me to grow my personal knowledge of health care and connect my peers to become more involved in clinical trials. The Older Adult Research Specialist (OARS) Training program seemed to be a good fit. An added bonus is the training program is delivered virtually, through Zoom, which allowed me to more easily participate. We even got a stipend for going through the program! Older Adult Research Specialists recruit and retain older adult peers in clinical trials to help support research and the health of future generations.

3. Why do you think older adults don't participate in clinical trials?

Older adults may not be aware of the clinical trials that are available to them in their area. Also, information about opportunities to participate in clinical trials may not be provided to older adults by hospitals or clinics. Some healthcare providers may assume that older adults don't want to, or can't, participate. The research community needs to make better efforts to reach older adults. Right now, you might hear of a trial through your doctor because of a specific situation or you might see a flyer posted in an elevator when you are going to a healthcare visit. There is no regular flow of information to older adults about opportunities to participate in research, so we are trying to change that! Older adults need to know, when they participate in research, they are contributing to better health outcomes in the future. They and/or their families may directly benefit.

They could be contributing to the development of a safe, new treatment for a chronic condition they currently are dealing with.

4. Now that you have been in your role as an Older Adult Research Specialist for a while, what ideas do you have to encourage older adults to participate in clinical trials?

Older adults need to become more invested and curious about their health and the chronic conditions they may have. Research can help us learn better ways to manage those conditions. I have prostate cancer. I want to know about the clinical trials available to me. I want to know what is best for my diet and how exercise can improve my longevity.



Kathryn Nearing, PhD and Bucky Dilts

Participating in clinical trials will open a whole new world of information, education, as well as opportunities to meet great people with whom you will work and build new social networks.

Participating in clinical trials gives you more knowledge, gives you greater social interaction with others and makes you feel like you're a part of something. Be a community liaison for your group or club and get others interested in trials. When you have information on clinical trials, share that information with your friends. Help get it out to others. The more you learn, the more curious you become, the healthier your outlook will be on life.



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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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