



# APA Aging Issues Newsletter

**August 2004    Convention Issue**

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### **Psychologists Make a Significant Contribution: Psychology and Aging Brochure**

Developed by the Office on Aging with funding from the Retirement Research Foundation, this new brochure highlights the contributions of psychology to the health and well being of older adults. Its objectives are to inform policy makers and health and aging organizations of psychologists' contributions to aging issues; and to support our ongoing efforts to advocate for the inclusion of geropsychology in endeavors to improve services, programs, research and professional education and training to meet the needs of the growing older adult population. See the resources section of this newsletter for ordering information.

### **Geropsychology: It's YOUR Future!**

A second set of materials developed with funding from the Retirement Research Foundation targets undergraduate psychology students to promote geropsychology as a career option. This August, a poster and fact sheet highlighting opportunities for education, practice and research in geropsychology will be mailed to academic institutions. See the resources section of this newsletter for ordering information.

### **APA/ABA Assessment of Capacity in Older Adults Project**

APA and ABA are collaborating in the area of capacity assessment in older adults. The Capacity Assessment in Older Adults Project arose from discussions between the APA Office on Aging, the ABA Commission on Law and Aging, the APA Committee on Aging (CONA), and the Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Issues (COLI) Task Force on Facilitating APA/ABA Relations. The opportunity for collaboration in this area is ripe as attorneys are increasingly confronted with issues related to assessment of capacity in older adults, and psychologists have a scientific body of knowledge in this area that can assist attorneys in their dealings with elder clients. A draft of the Project's first product, a document for practicing attorneys, *Considerations in the Preliminary Determination of Capacity in Older Adults: A Guide for Attorneys* has just been completed. The document will be available in early 2005. A CONA Conversation Hour on this topic will be held on Thursday, July 29th from 3:00-4:30 p.m. at the Hilton

Hawaiian Village Beach Resort, South Pacific Ballroom IV. A symposium on the Project's work, "Assessment of Capacity in Older Adults: An APA-ABA Collaboration" will also be held on Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-9:50 a.m. at the Convention Center Meeting Room 317A. *All are invited to attend.*

### **Petition For The Recognition Of Geropsychology As A Specialty In Professional Psychology**

A petition has been filed by Division 20 and Division 12-Section II with The APA Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP) for the recognition of Geropsychology as a specialty in professional psychology. CRSPPP will make a recommendation regarding recognition to the APA Board of Directors, who in turn, makes their recommendation to the APA Council of Representatives. The Council then votes to approve or disapprove. The Geropsychology petition can be viewed at: [www.apa.org/crsppp/geropsych.pdf](http://www.apa.org/crsppp/geropsych.pdf).

### **Retirement Options for Psychologists: An APA Presidential Initiative**

One of APA President Diane Halpern's three presidential initiatives focuses on the problems of and opportunities for psychologists, as they grow older. Its objective is to help interested retired or retiring psychologists find meaningful paid or volunteer work options that utilize their skills and experience. Activities planned include: a survey of members to learn of their basic plans for retirement, predictors of retirement, their knowledge about resources APA provides, and what they would like APA to provide; providing information to retiring psychologists on issues such as how to... wind down a practice or an academic career; and encouraging mentoring relationships between older and early career psychologists in divisions and state associations.

### **The National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging**

This Coalition is a group of over 40 national health and aging organizations committed to issues of mental health and aging. The Coalition, staffed by the Office on Aging, meets quarterly at the APA headquarters in Washington, D.C. Recent Coalition activities included discussions with: the Center for Mental Health Services Associate Director on Consumer Affairs on efforts to reduce on discrimination and stigma; the branch chief of the National Institute of Mental Health's newly reestablished Aging Treatment and Prevention Intervention Research Branch on the branch's mission and plans; and the President of the SPRY Foundation on the recent *Computer-based Technology and Caregiving for Older Adults* Conference.

### **Public Policy and Advocacy Update**

The Public Policy Office has been working closely with staff from the offices of Representative Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Senator John Breaux (D-LA) on the Positive Aging Act. This legislation would enhance access to vital mental health services for older Americans through mental health outreach to primary care and community-based settings. Unfortunately, our sponsor, Senator John Breaux will be retiring from the Senate at the end of his term, leaving our bill without a Senate champion. Most recently, we have been working with staff members from the office of Senator Hillary Rodham-Clinton (D-NY) on a new iteration of the same bill. An Aging Issues Coordinated Advocacy Campaign for CONA and other leaders in the APA aging community is being undertaken. Campaign participants meet with Senators at home in their districts in order to establish/strengthen relationships and share psychological research and knowledge on important aging legislation. APA also joined forces with other aging and mental health organizations to support the reestablishment of an aging-specific branch within NIMH. The branch was reestablished in February 2004. The Public Policy Office provided support to APA member, Donna Cohen, Ph.D. who was a witness at the Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing on *Crimes without Criminals? Seniors, Dementia, and the Aftermath* in March 2004. Dr. Cohen discussed the lack of data on the prevalence of crime among individuals with dementia. She urged Congress to support additional research and data collection in this area and highlighted the importance of prevention and intervention services for older adults and their families. Finally, the Office on Aging is working with the Education Policy Office to advocate for the inclusion of psychologists in a proposed geriatric loan forgiveness program.

## Available Resources

To subscribe to this *APA Aging Issues Newsletter* or to receive a copy of the materials listed below, please contact Wanda Franklin, Administrative Assistant for the APA Office on Aging at [wfranklin@apa.org](mailto:wfranklin@apa.org). Most materials are also available on the Office on Aging website at [www.apa.org/pi/aging](http://www.apa.org/pi/aging), unless another website is noted below.

### ***The APA Aging Issues Newsletter***

Keep abreast of all that is happening by subscribing to this e-newsletter that is published three times yearly. It reports on current APA activities related to aging and provides information on national aging initiatives, publications, conference summaries, as well as general information on health, psychology and aging.

### ***Psychologists Make a Significant Difference: Psychology and Aging***

This new brochure highlights the contributions of psychology to the health and well being of older adults. Developed for policy makers and other health and aging organizations.

### ***Geropsychology: It's YOUR Future!***

A student poster and fact sheet highlighting opportunities for education, practice and research.

### ***Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults***

These guidelines “provide practitioners with (a) a frame of reference for engaging in clinical work with older adults and (b) basic information and further references in the areas of attitudes, general aspects of aging, clinical issues, assessment, intervention, consultation, and continuing education and training relative to work with older adults.” They are available **only** online on the APA Practice Directorate website: [http://www.apa.org/practice/Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults.pdf](http://www.apa.org/practice/Guidelines%20for%20Psychological%20Practice%20with%20Older%20Adults.pdf)

### ***Medicare Local Medical Review Policies (LMRPs) Tool Kit***

The purpose of the tool kit is to assist psychologists in understanding Medicare provisions for psychological services and in providing input into their development. Components include an explanation of the LMRP development process, opportunities for advocacy, and tools, such as samples of correspondence with insurance intermediaries, “psychology-friendly” LMRP provisions, and empirical evidence to support incorporation of such provisions. It is available **only** online at <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/lmrp/>.

### ***Psychology and Aging Resource Guides***

These Web-based guides summarize research studies and relevant books and journal articles on important topics such as Psychotherapy, Depression and Suicide, Insomnia, Human Sexuality, and Psychological Services for Long Term Care. They are available **only** online on the Office on Aging website.

### ***What Practitioners Should Know About Working With Older Adults***

This publication is designed to give psychologists and other health care providers important information to help guide their work with older adults.

### ***Older Adults' Health And Age-Related Changes: Reality Versus Myth***

Based on *What Practitioners Should Know About Working With Older Adults*, this pamphlet is intended for consumers.

### ***Elder Abuse and Neglect: In Search of Solutions***

A brochure written for consumers, but useful to anyone who wants to know more about elder abuse. Includes information about types of abuse and neglect, what causes it, and where to go for help.

### ***APA Aging Issues Fact Sheets***

These fact sheets on depression, suicide, mental health and aging policy issues and recommendations, and the contributions of psychology to the health and well being of older adults, are available **only** on line at: <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/>

### ***Fostering Resilience in Response to Terrorism: For Psychologists Working with Older Adults***

Produced by The APA Task Force on Promoting Resilience in Response to Terrorism, this fact sheet is available **only** online at: <http://www.apa.org/psychologists/pdfs/olderadults.pdf>

### ***Mental Health for a Lifetime: Research for the Mental Health Needs of Older Americans***

NIMH National Advisory Mental Health Council, Aging Research Workgroup's Final Report available **only** online at: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/council/agingreport.cfm>.

## **Aging at APA**

### **The Office on Aging**

The Office on Aging is the focal point for APA activities pertaining to aging. Its overarching mission is to promote the application of psychological knowledge to issues affecting the health and well being of older adults. Deborah DiGilio, MPH, staffs this office and the APA Committee on Aging. For more information, please contact Deborah at: 202-336-6135 or [ddigilio@apa.org](mailto:ddigilio@apa.org).

### **The Committee on Aging (CONA)**

CONA is a six-member committee of psychologists with substantive professional expertise in aging issues who are selected to serve three-year terms. CONA works toward the optimal development of older adults, expanded scientific understanding of adult development and aging, and the delivery of appropriate psychological services to older persons. Members include John Cavanaugh, PhD (Chair), Toni G. Antonucci, PhD, Barry Edelstein, PhD, Gregory A. Hinrichsen, PhD (chair-elect), Beth Hudnall Stamm, PhD, and Leonard W. Poon, PhD.

### **Public Interest Public Policy Office**

The Public Policy Office works closely with the Office on Aging on aging policy issues at the federal level. Diane Elmore, Ph.D., SPSSI James Marshall Public Policy Scholar currently covers aging policy issues. She can be reached at (202) 336-6097 or [delmore@apa.org](mailto:delmore@apa.org).

**APA Division 20 (Adult Development & Aging)** is concerned with the study of psychological development and change throughout the adult years. Their website includes resources for educators and students, information about graduate programs for students interested in pursuing this field, publications, conference information, and links to other sites. <http://apadiv20.phhp.ufl.edu>

**APA Division 12 – Section II (Clinical Geropsychology)** is devoted to research, training, and the provision of psychological services for older adults. Their website includes information on training opportunities for students and professionals including clinical psychology internships, postdoctoral fellowship opportunities, continuing education offerings, research funding and job information. <http://www.geropsych.org>.